

# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

THE deadlock in Paris, of which we have had many inspired accounts, is serious enough, and its seriousness is increased by the consideration that only a choice between two evils is left. On the one side President Wilson presses for the inclusion of the League of Nations draft in the preliminary treaty; on the other, the French, but not the British delegates, press for its omission, ostensibly on the ground that its inclusion will delay the presentation of the terms, but really because they do not believe in a League at all. The draft is unsatisfactory, and is so likely to perpetuate the victorious alliance as a machine for merely holding Germany down that its incorporation in its present form—and there can be no question of seriously amending it within the fortnight within which we are promised a preliminary peace—is a qualified blessing. The Germans would almost certainly refuse to participate of their own free will. They would be likely to feel that the League of Nations was part of the penalty imposed upon them, as indeed, in its present form, it is. They would be forced to submit, but they could not be forced to agree. Moreover, such odium may attach to the scheme of the League in the minds of the German people that it is at least doubtful whether any subsequent amendment would reconcile them to it.

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YET we are convinced that Mr. Wilson is right, and that the draft should be part of the treaty. A League of Nations from which Germany and Russia are excluded is a delusion and a snare. The victorious alliance would be opposed within a measurable number of years by an alliance between Germany and Russia, which would be able to challenge the present combination. In equity it would have a case. It would also have a great deal more material power than we are wont to imagine. The industry of a democratic Germany in combination with the natural wealth of Russia may produce formidable results. On the other hand, this fatal re-establishment of the system of armed alliances, which may only be problematic if the League

of Nations draft is included in the terms of peace, will be inevitable if the terms of peace are first imposed and the League of Nations left for subsequent discussion and ultimate abandonment. Many of the actual terms of peace, such as the disposal of the German colonies, are only saved from being acts of mere acquisitive power by the intervention of the League. The colonies will undoubtedly be taken from Germany's possession by the treaty. Since the League will not exist to receive them, and they cannot be *res nullius*, they must pass to the sovereignty of the Allies. We do not easily conceive any one of them surrendering a title to territory which has once been acquired.

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THE choice between evils thus resolves into a choice between a bad peace *simpliciter* and a bad peace qualified by some kind of a League of Nations. Seriously, we do not believe that once the League has been omitted from the treaty the treaty will ever be revised by any League that may subsequently be established. Just as the Allies now appeal to the secret treaties, and refuse to acknowledge that they have been superseded by the fourteen points, so the authority of the League will be insufficient to prevail against the accomplished fact of the peace. If, however, the Draft League is included in the peace terms, the peace terms themselves stand or fall with it. If only for selfish reasons, those who desire the peace must desire the League, which is its foundation. Moreover, the League, once internationally established, must be revised and made more equitable. If the Associated Powers refuse to do this in justice to the enemy, they must do it out of deference to the neutrals, who will certainly refuse to enter into a combination for the purpose of holding Germany in chains. Thus, even a bad League of Nations, if it is an integral portion of the peace terms, offers a road by which the world can rise to an atmosphere of international equity. A peace without the League permits no escape at all.

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APPARENTLY the terms of peace are to receive yet another extension. Germany is to be compelled to surrender her cables and the Kiel Canal is to be internationalized. The Allies are said to be divided, but these are the "strong" solutions. As usual, the plan contemplated is absolutely vague. "Internationalization" may mean any one of a large number of things. What is, however, common to them all is the surrender of sovereignty by the nation in possession. If this primary condition of internationalization is to be applied in the case of the Kiel Canal, we do not see how it can be defended. The Kiel Canal runs through German territory, and we have no more moral right simply to take it from Germany than we have to take Berlin. We have a right to firm safeguards against militarism and a right to claim passage for the ships of all nations. Perhaps, however, it is premature to criticize until we know exactly what the Allies understand by internationalization in this case. It may be that they intend to seize the mechanical works of the canal as part payment of Germany's liabilities, and vest them in an international company. Many things, in themselves desirable, could be done with

the canal in this way, and they might work well if Germany were given an equal voice in the management. But internationalization, if it is to be really internationalization, implies a mere violation of German sovereignty.

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THE details of German disarmament are now complete. They reduce Germany, one of the great determining forces in Europe and in the world's history, to the military status of Holland or Greece. The scheme is Napoleon's, after Jena, cut down and elaborated in detail. A maximum of seven divisions of infantry and three of cavalry will be permitted. This equipment is minutely regulated. *Their* Great Staff disappears; *ours* is being prepared. The cavalry and horse artillery are cut down to 17,000 men—food for a few hours' expenditure of modern ammunition. Military schools are cut down to scale, and all the non-military establishments—veteran societies, even tourist clubs—must be strictly non-military. (What of St. Cyr and Sandhurst?) There must be no fortification within 50 miles of the Rhine. (What of Metz, Verdun, Toul, &c., &c.?) The manufacture of arms is only to be carried on under Allied supervision. (What of Woolwich, Vickers, Creuzot, &c., &c.?) All right, necessary and perfectly just—*provided* we, France, and Italy follow suit. Otherwise an iniquity.

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As we write, the issue of the great crisis in industry is undetermined, and cannot be clarified until the week-end is over. Rumor states that the Coal Commission will produce at least three reports. One will represent the point of view of the coal-owners, one that of the labor representatives, one that of the Chairman and possibly of some of the other members. Probably the miners will be offered an eight-hours day from bank to bank, a rise of 2s. 6d. to 3s. a day in wages, and a system of joint control. The temper of the miners admits of less doubt. They regard their programme as a minimum demand, and even if their leaders would like to compromise upon it, their full Conference may not allow them to do so. Even if the Government's reply on the question of wages and hours is satisfactory, there remains the vital issue of nationalization. It is possible that if a decision is promised on this point within a short period, and if the Coal Commission's report definitely condemns the present method of conducting the mines, the issue will not be forced prematurely. But the men seem determined. The miner makes up his mind slowly. But when he has made it up, he changes it even more slowly.

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THE railway situation is also extremely obscure. The character of the offers made of the railway companies makes acceptance doubtful. There is said to have been a second proposal, which Mr. J. H. Thomas brought back from his flying visit to the Prime Minister in Paris. But nothing is known of its nature. The railway leaders, even if they desire to compromise on their national programme, would have their delegate meeting to consider, and this is just as likely to insist on the major parts of its demands as the Miners' Conference. The transport workers, too, have failed to reach any accommodation with the employers upon the forty-four hours' week. In a word, all the bodies connected with the Triple Alliance, to say nothing of several important groups of workers outside it, are virtually at a deadlock.

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THE industrial situation is, therefore, menacing in the extreme. The promises of immense industrial changes made by Mr. Lloyd George and his Government, to be initiated as soon as the war was over, have roused

great expectations. The workmen see no prospect that they will be fulfilled. The Government lacks both constancy and vision; it is not trusted, and the strong words of the Prime Minister dwindle to a tale of little meaning. But we earnestly plead with the workers for patience and deep consideration before they take the field. They have the right to withhold their labor. But a strike of the coal and transport workers must paralyze Great Britain. In the act it antagonizes the mass of consumers. And should it fail, as it is likely to do, and the maximum demands are all lost, the workmen's movement may either be thrown back for a generation, or a dragging period of almost anarchic strife ensue. Too long has war desecrated man's soul and wasted his estate. Let us not run to it again. We have another word to say. A strike of the transport trades may involve a large use of the soldiers for preventive purposes, and, also, it may be, as substitutes for strikers. The Army is not in wise hands. Parliament will do well to canvass its disposition and the commands issued to it. One thoughtless act may kindle a wide-spreading flame.

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THE Joint Committee appointed by the Industrial Conference, although little has been said about its work, has, we understand, been sitting steadily throughout the past fortnight, and has accomplished a great deal of useful work. The Sub-Committees were due to report on Thursday, and discussions on their reports will be taking place throughout next week. We much hope that this initial experiment will not be thrown away, and that some form of permanent machinery for consultation between the Government, the employers, and the trade unions on questions of industrial policy will emerge from the reassembled Conference on April 4th. The creation of some form of representative machinery will be a great step to industrial peace.

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THERE is a sudden change in the political sky. "Free" Liberalism has revived, and has driven Mr. George's nominee and coupon-holder, the super-Tory Mr. Mason, out of West Leyton (where a Tory majority of 5,788 has been changed into a Liberal majority of 2,019). The reaction was sudden and violent. The negotiations between the "Liberal" Coalitionists and the Free Liberals were broken off. The Northcliffe Press (which has long been dangerously and even venomously anti-George) ridiculed the coupon system, and declared that henceforth the only possible plan was for Mr. George to issue a half-coupon to a Liberal candidate and Mr. Law a second half to the Tory representative. A vigorous Liberal opposition was started in Central Hull, and in a third vacancy, that of West Aberdeenshire, Mr. J. M. Henderson, an old Liberal member who had been beaten at the General Election, announced a fresh candidature as a free Liberal, with every prospect of success. If the movement goes on, Mr. George will soon have to choose whether he will base his Government on Liberalism or on Toryism. A trick rider cannot bestride two horses which have broken loose and are plunging violently in opposite directions.

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THE new Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply to Sir Donald Maclean's and Mr. Lambert's searching criticisms of the Churchill and Seely Estimates and of the vast civil burdens, spoke in marked contrast to those enthusiasts for war and war expenditure. But he said nothing of substance. He could not deny Mr. Lambert's assertion that he must budget for an expenditure of 1,500 millions. He admitted that the restrictions on the

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export of woollens must go on because the blockade which stops them must continue as a matter of Allied "policy." Nor would he pledge himself to Sir Donald Maclean's suggestion of an Advisory Committee of "business" members of Parliament. All that he suggested was that the war estimates were not quite final, and might be revised if Europe were "demilitarized"—England's example pointing, meanwhile, to complete re-militarization. The only way back to prosperity, he concluded, was by greater efficiency, greater production, and greater export trade. How can exports revive if imports, on which they feed, are cut down? But that is what Chamberlainism means and portends.

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THE NEW German-Austrian National Assembly met in Vienna on March 4th, but without the fifty-four representatives of German Bohemia and the Sudetic Lands. These territories contain about 3½ millions of German-speaking people, who have unambiguously declared their wish to remain a component part of the German-Austrian Republic and ultimately to be joined with Germany. The Czecho-Slovaks, however, are in military possession of these lands, which extend in an irregular border around Bohemia and into Moravia, and claim them as a part of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. Consequently the elections to the German-Austrian National Assembly were not allowed to be held there. The Austrian Liberals suggested a way out of the difficulty by nominating deputies for these territories on the basis of the former elections, but this was rejected. It was then proposed to give these people a "State Office" in Vienna, so that they could have a voice in the Government, although not in the National Assembly. The Social-Democrats, the strongest party in Austria, rejected this plan too, and took the line that sooner or later the Entente must realize the injustice that was being done to these peoples. As a protest, however, against the suppression of the elections, the Social-Democrats organized a demonstration in the shape of a general strike, to take place in the Sudetic Lands on March 4th.

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EVERYTHING went as arranged. Shops, offices and warehouses shut; factories and even the railways stopped work; and meetings and processions were held in every centre. In places like Karlsbad, Reichenberg, Teplitz, and Aussig the number of the demonstrators exceeded 30,000. No official prohibition of this demonstration came from the Czech Government, but in nearly every instance the crowds were dispersed by the Czecho-Slovak military; fighting ensued and resulted in the deaths of about twenty German-Bohemians and the wounding of nearly 100. The four towns mentioned were the chief sufferers. The Czech reports justify the shooting by the "hostile attitude" of the mobs, "shots from the crowd," and insults. The Austrian reports make out that the Czech soldiery fired upon the demonstrators without any adequate warning. It is difficult to see how the case for annexation is bettered by such action.

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It was inevitable that the first great Fleet action should become a subject of controversy, and we see no reason why Lord Jellicoe should fear the verdict of a critical study of this memorable battle. But there are certain methods of debate against which it is necessary to protest. Mr. Arthur Pollen, who, in the early stages of the war, supplied

a measure of really competent criticism, has now turned his pen to a form of attack worthy only of the "Daily Mail." In an article written in "The Sunday Times," he proceeds to heap upon Lord Jellicoe all the evils which have resulted from a prolongation of the war from the year 1916 to last November. Upon those evils we see no reason to differ from Mr. Pollen; but that they are in any way attributable to Jellicoe's handling of the Jutland battle is sheer moonshine.

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MR. POLLEN brings the charge home to Lord Jellicoe by means of two assumptions. The first is that if Jellicoe had acted otherwise he would have annihilated the German Fleet; and the second that, if he had done so, Germany would have given in, and the war would have been over two years ago. Neither of these assumptions will bear even a moment's examination. Mr. Pollen persists, as do all who think with him, in ignoring the only points which matter. Lord Jellicoe has pointed out that our shell was badly inferior to that used by the Germans. Yet, in spite of this fact, there is a constant tendency to stress the British superiority in fire. It did not, in fact, exist. The British superiority only extended to weight, whereas it is effectiveness of fire that most matters. Surely anyone can see that ships firing round shot would be at the mercy of vessels using modern high-explosive shell; and the case was not essentially different at Jutland. The chances that the British Fleet might have suffered seriously—too seriously for its future work—if it had used audacious tactics in a bad light to force the fighting in the neighbourhood of enemy minefields and under torpedo craft attacks, are too considerable for the careful student quite to ignore. We shall never know, and hence it behoves us to be cautious in our judgments; but, in the light of the revelations made by Lord Jellicoe it is extremely rash to rule out this possibility.

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THE facts which Mr. Pollen ignores are these. The only commander who suffered really heavy loss in the battle was Admiral Beatty. If we must make comparisons, this should be our starting point. Admiral Beatty was so unlucky as to lose two capital ships and actually to sink none. That is all we know about that incident. Those who compare Admiral Beatty with Lord Jellicoe to the disadvantage of the latter have this fact to explain away. And it may be said at once that any consideration which exculpates Beatty is a plea *a fortiori* for Jellicoe's tactics. Another fact is that Jellicoe was gravely misled as to the point at which he should achieve contact with the enemy. In his book he, very generously we think, says that this was inevitable on Beatty's part. The third and most important fact is that Jellicoe's rôle was to beat the German fleet, and he did it. We know now that it was considered unthinkable after Jutland that the German fleet should ever again fight a fleet action. But Jellicoe relinquished command of the Grand Fleet in November, 1916, and the unrestricted submarine campaign did not begin until three months afterwards. If Jellicoe should have given battle in May, 1916, *à outrance*, why did not Beatty, with a relatively much greater superiority? We seem to remember that Mr. Pollen agrees that minefields depend upon capital ships. Why, then, not mine in the submarines when the Fleet was so powerful? The answer is that naval men see the problem more clearly. The tactics of journalists may be good enough to besmirch a great sailor's reputation. But they would find short shrift in battle action.



## Politics and Affairs.

### PEACE OR NO PEACE?

It is, no doubt, important that peace should come soon, and that to hasten its arrival the chief representative of Great Britain should be continually present in Paris. By all means let Mr. George respond to the Wilson-Clemenceau-Orlando appeal to stay there and ensue peace with an ardor equal to his pursuit of war. But we should be more impressed with the zeal of the Allies for "peace in two weeks" if during the last four months their feet had been visibly shod with its preparation. The Armistice has been no peace; on the contrary, it has been a veiled prosecution of the war. The Blockade, which is the instrument of the Armistice, is no peace, nor the Famine, which is its child. There remains the further question, whether any truly pacific element will belong to the peace itself. There are people in Europe, and out of it, who, when they speak of peace mean theft. They would steal Germany's mines, cables, canals, coal, lands, ships, credit, industries, patents, trade secrets, remove her landmarks, and open her naked breast to the thrust of all her enemies all at once and everywhere. They say so and they mean so. It is of no consequence whether such a peace is made to-morrow, or after a thousand to-morrows. In either case it will be the end of European civilization. The issue (and the good Angel of Earth must hold his breath as he awaits it) is whether Justice lives in the soul of the conquerors and will find expression in their Act.

Let us try and seek proportion. And the path to proportion may be found if this self-conscious and self-righteous age will compare its work with that of its predecessors. The last great European peace was made over a hundred years ago. It was concluded in circumstances not dissimilar from our own. The Continent had been desolated by a would-be conqueror. He had been beaten, exiled, and disgraced, and the world was well quit of him. His kingdom had been reconstituted on terms partially consonant with the political ideas of the time. The reign of the upstart, the neo-idealism of military force and intellectual skill, had been destroyed; the time had come for expedients effecting a minimum of chance, but on the whole aiming at the restoration of the old and the customary. With a doubtful exception, all the monarchs and statesmen who shaped the peace of Vienna were essentially conservative. They had a clear idea of Europe. They had no idea at all of the rights of nationality, and, being all kings or servants of kings, what they knew of democracy they hated. They chaffered peoples like bags of wool. Having, for example, figured it out that in the general scheme of "compensations" which made up the new balance of European power they "owed" Prussia some 3,400,000 "souls," they made up the tale by giving her 800,000 such "souls" in Poland, 1,044,000 on the left bank of the Rhine, 829,000 in Westphalia, and 782,000 in Saxony.\* But they were fair to each other, and, subject to its cynical treatment of human rights, their ground-plan of policy was just. "Security, not revenge," was the motto of the moderate and prudent Castlereagh. Central Europe had been overrun and demoralized by the intruding East and West; the object of the Congress of Vienna was to re-establish the Centre.† But there was to be no preponderating or tyrannous force. After a generation of war the old Europe was essentially reconstituted. Russia and her impatient

Tsar were kept within bounds, and beaten France was not allowed to go down before a victorious and vindictive Prussia. Everywhere there was to be moderate, balanced, calculated strength. Policy, not passion, ruled those unheroic minds; and if nothing great or lasting came of their counsels, they both made a peace and kept it.

How and why? The answer is simple and pertinent. *Because they admitted the enemy to the Joint Executive to which, then as now, the future government of Europe was committed.* The moment the Council of Four (Austria, Prussia, Russia and England) grew into the Council of Five, the governance of Europe was committed not to a War Alliance, but to the concerted brain and force of all the greater units of control. The transformation was not the work of England or of the Powers. The genius of Tallyrand forced the closed doors of the Congress of Vienna, and from the hour of the formal admittance of France, peace was assured. Up to that point, says Mr. Webster, "the four Powers had been unable to agree, and had in fact come to the verge of war." But with France's help England could overrule the Tsar, put a bit in the mouth of Prussia, and assure, at least, a government for Central Europe. Moderation was henceforth the distinguishing mark of the Congress. The armies of occupation were limited to 150,000 men, and were soon reduced. Prussia's attempt (corresponding with that of France to-day) to impose crushing financial reprisals was defeated, the indemnity was fixed at twenty-eight millions, and the reparations fund was cut down to less than ten millions, so that in the result France was able to pay off her obligations in reasonable time, and to emerge from years of the war with which her ambition had scourged Europe, a rich and vigorous State.

Such was the work of merely prudential statesmanship one hundred years ago. It spoke no high language, for it had no great thoughts. It was what we call "business-like." It did not starve France, or crush her with indemnities, or disarm her, or hem her in with vindictive enemies, or steal her trade, or even punish her. Castlereagh did not think it foolish to say that he wanted a "strong" France, and wished to help her back to her forfeited place in the European family. He fought England's war-friends and helped England's war-enemies in the committee rooms of Vienna, because it suited England's policy and furthered the cause of peace, and he forgot Bonaparte from the moment when it was no longer necessary to remember him. In short, this reactionary Tory acted like a sensible man, a good, patriot, and a wise, if extremely limited, European. It happens to be remembered to his shame that he did much evil to Ireland and to the English people, and it may be truly urged against his foreign policy that it had no heed for principles, ignored nationality, and took thought only for his generation and its brief to-morrow. Nevertheless his fugitive and commonplace conceptions gave Europe many years of quiet, and of moderate armaments. Again—why?

Chiefly because it avoided the capital sin of Paris, but also because its minor offences were subject to a consistent and not an exclusively self-regarding policy. England, in particular, was a moderating and not far from a disinterested force. And though the Congress as a whole took no account of the claims of nationality, it did not need to invent hypocritical formulæ for ignoring them in one instance and gratifying them in another. With the Balkans it had nothing to do, nor with the *débris* of an Austria in dissolution, nor with Central Europe in flames and Russia temporarily lost to the European system. But having far less to mend than we, it was also much more careful to reconstruct. It indulged in some sheer

\* M. Seignobos' "Histoire Politique de l'Europe Contemporaine," p. 5.  
† See an admirable account of the History of the Congress of Vienna by Mr. C. K. Webster. (Oxford University Press.)



spoliation; but though the base spirit of revenge gibbered at its portals, it never found free admittance to its counsels, nor would conservative Europe deal with Monarchical France as Democratic Europe now proposes to deal with Republican Germany. The Congress of Vienna prepared a peace in the spirit of peace—that is to say, as a formal act of negotiation with its enemies, who were then and henceforth restored to their allotted and appropriate place in the counsels of Europe. In leaving out Germany, the Conference of Paris has forgotten Europe, and doomed itself to draft, not a peace, but a penal code. Vienna had an imperfect, but still a workable political concept, which was the Balance of Power, and a modifying political instrument, which was the Concert. The first has been lost, and well lost, for ever. The second survives. But it can only be recovered in its modern shape of a League of Peoples—and not of some peoples, but of all.

### THE GUILT OF THE FAMINE.

Now that the crime and capital blunder of having maintained the blockade against Germany since the Armistice has had to be acknowledged, the process of self-exculpation has begun. The Fabian organ of the Government last week, in an outburst of somewhat disingenuous realism, professed to examine the causes of the great famine in Europe. It discovered that the main obstacle in the way of relieving the distress of Europe is the shortage of tonnage. Sir John Beale, a fortnight before, had made this point extremely clear. The shortage of tonnage is, indeed, one of the most serious difficulties with which a statesmanship genuinely anxious to avert starvation from Europe has, and will have, to contend. But our "Socialist" contemporary went on to say that "the principal culprit in this matter of tonnage is the United States." After describing the withdrawal of the United States from the International Council to control shipping, the delay in "turning round ships" after the Armistice, and the strikes in the ship-repairing yards, the writer continued:—

"Such appear to be the fundamental causes of the famine which afflicts to-day in varying degrees not merely the enemy, but every Allied country east of the Rhine. There is no doubt that among these causes the American Government's shipping policy since the Armistice has been the most influential, as it is the most easily removable."

In other words, the money-grabbing materialists of the United States have thwarted the splendid moral impulses of the Entente. European humanity has been once more wrecked by transpontine humbug. And the argument is so sober and precise. For its parade of "Sachlichkeit" it is worthy of the "Cologne Gazette" in the palmy days before the British military censor began to exercise his blue pencil in the editorial room.

Before this elegant apologia becomes incorporated in official history, it is as well that an effort should be made to reveal the casuistry upon which it reposes. If we leave aside for the moment the suggestion that the United States is chiefly to blame for the famine which threatens Europe, the substance of the argument is that if the Entente had decided to feed Germany, they could not have done so because the United States had deserted the International Board of Shipping Control. American ships had been diverted to extra-European trade. This is held to be proved by the fact that countries allied to the Entente are also on the brink of starvation, although

there never was any question about the duty of the Entente to feed them.

It is, of course, possible that the failure of the United States to retain international control of shipping and exports was a blunder. America wanted to revert to free trading; probably the world was not ready for that change. In the International Board of Control the Associated Powers had a complete mechanism for re-establishing Europe, which would have been invaluable if it could have been set in motion. We do not know what reason there is for saying that Mr. Wilson was, in fact, forced to yield to the pressure of "big business." We do not pretend to know the inner history of the decision, but we think that had a real moral issue been involved, President Wilson would have resisted the pressure. But what was the position? The condition of Europe then was only a degree less precarious than it is now. On the one hand, the Allies had proclaimed, amid general applause, their determination to maintain the blockade of the enemy countries. With one voice their Press declared the German cry of coming starvation to be false, a mere political manoeuvre. On the other hand, America had made her contrary view perfectly clear. Mr. Wilson asked Congress to appropriate twenty millions for the supply of food to Austria, Turkey, Poland, and Western Russia, and fixed America's contribution to the cause of suffering humanity in Europe during the next seven months at a probable £300,000,000 worth of foodstuffs. That was not all. The State Department at Washington made known its conviction that the "*economic restrictions on Germany must be relaxed*," and the blockade lifted, before the treaty was signed. But while Mr. Hoover, within a few days of the conclusion of the Armistice, pointed out the necessity of feeding Europe, the British naval authorities made the investment of Germany more stringent than it had ever been during the war. Germany's Baltic trade and fishing were brought to a standstill. It was the Entente which deliberately made impossible resistance on moral grounds to the demand of the American interests for the abolition of international control. How was it possible to demonstrate that the retention of this control was necessary in order to save Europe from starvation, when the Allies were taking steps to exclude food or raw materials both from the enemy countries and from Russia?

The whole attempt to shift on to the United States the guilt of what will assuredly be known as the most wanton crime ever committed by nations which claim to be civilized reposes upon the singular assumption that the Entente Powers were willing and anxious to revictual Europe. If this had been the case, some reprobation of American shortsightedness might have been permitted. But the facts of the situation were utterly different. We repeat that immediately the Armistice was concluded, Mr. Hoover declared that the feeding of Europe, enemy and ally alike, was an urgent necessity. President Wilson, by whose mediation and on the basis of whose points the Armistice was concluded, had undertaken that Germany should receive the necessary supplies. The Entente, week after week, prevented the feeding of Germany. The English authorities suppressed the essential portion of Mr. Hoover's original statement. We do not wish to maintain that the United States was perfectly innocent. The guilt falls upon the Associated Powers as a whole. They who pursued tactics of obstruction at every point, and they who had not the moral courage to insist on the obstruction being removed, are both reprehensible. But the origins of the obstruction were to be sought in Europe, not in the United States. We

hope that one day certain right-minded and conscientious British officials will be able to tell the full story of the difficulties with which they have had to contend.

The questions of feeding the enemy and of feeding the Allies are not to be confused. But they have this one point of similarity, that the moral obligation upon the Associated Powers to feed both enemy and ally was equal. The suggestion that it is somehow good to starve a submitted enemy and wicked to starve a friend, is due to that intolerable "war-coarsening" of the spirit which, as far as we know, Prince Max of Baden was the only man of eminence among the belligerents to condemn during the war. War between civilized nations differs from war between savages by this alone, that a defeated enemy is treated with mercy. Those who, tacitly or openly, advocate treating starving Germany differently from starving Roumania in the matter of food are real "Huns." Only when the identical moral basis of the problems has been settled and accepted, can their differences be fruitfully examined. So far as feeding Germany is concerned, the shortage of shipping did not exist. From the conclusion of the Armistice the German mercantile marine was at our disposal for the replenishment of Germany. Doubtless it would have taken time to make all her ships seaworthy, but if a beginning had been made immediately, the whole German merchant navy would have been ready by the end of January. The shortage of tonnage everywhere would have been relieved, for the Germans, as we know, would not have hesitated to make over all their ships in return for the guarantee of a minimum supply of food, to carry which not more than one-half, and probably only one-third, of the German tonnage would have been necessary. Instead, however, of making any such arrangement, the Associated Powers waited until January 17th to offer Germany an utterly inadequate supply of food in return for the complete surrender of her shipping. The Germans had no choice but to agree. But instead of putting the agreement into operation France was allowed to object to Germany paying for the food with gold or goods, which would thus be deducted from the total sum available to meet the French demands for indemnity. These objections and negotiations were reported in the English Press as something eminently natural. Hardly a paper dared to protest against the indecency of the affair; hardly a paper was aware that there was anything indecent in it at all. On March 4th the Associated Powers went further; they issued a peremptory demand that the German mercantile marine should be surrendered *en bloc*, "without regard to the food supply." Naturally, the Germans refused. Yet the Associated Powers now talk of "reasons of humanity."

That the shortage of shipping exists and would have existed even if the Associated Powers had decided to do their plain duty and guarantee the enemy the indispensable minimum of food, cannot alter the fact that, solely because of their blind obstinacy, the European Allies refused the vital reinforcement of world shipping which the German merchant navy would have supplied. The premature abolition of international control by the United States has, indeed, led to grave difficulties, but these difficulties could have been essentially decreased by the equitable use of the German ships. But even if this had not been the case, with what countenance can an English journal charge the United States with the chief responsibility for the European famine, when the Entente Powers, who were in Europe and of Europe, were foremost in denying that such a famine either existed or was threatened? One might understand such a disingenuous apology if it had appeared in the columns

of the "Times." In a professedly open-minded organ of Socialism it is an offence to those who cleave to the pitiful remains of the morality of civilization.

### THE PARTY OF THE COUPON.

THE West Leyton election came as a bomb-shell in the world of politics. Its sensational result conveyed many messages to Parliament. Perhaps the most important of these was a warning to the "Liberal Coalitionists." It is evident that the constituencies fail to understand their position. In so far as they understand it, they have no tolerance for it. These "Coalitionists" had no share in the victory. None of them came to help or speak for the Liberal candidate who gained it. Their sole representative during the whole contest was Sir Hamar Greenwood, M.P., a minor Under-Secretary, who went down to speak on the Tory platform. And, simultaneously with this betrayal of their duty, in the country they have been making advances for "unity" with the Liberals in Parliament. The situation is preposterous. "When is a Liberal not a Liberal?" may receive a variety of answers. But one answer is at least conclusive. "When he supports a Tory candidate who is opposing a Liberal in a Liberal constituency." But apart from West Leyton, the position of the Coalition "Liberals" is impossible. Elected largely by Tory voters, and pledged to support a Government predominantly Tory, they find themselves confronted with pledges repudiated and promises broken. If they keep their promise to support the Election programme, they are voting against the Coalition Government. If they keep their promises to support the Coalition Government they are voting against their Election programme. The first "acid test" came to them with unexpected celerity. And at the first touch they fell to pieces. Lord Balfour's nigger, confronted by the preacher with the choice "between death and damnation," decided that he would "take to the woods." In the Conscription division a small section of them, defying their Tory supporters, went into the Liberal lobby. A larger section, consisting of placemen, or would-be placemen, voted with the Tories. The majority "took to the woods," avoiding both division lobbies. But such an heroic course can only postpone the evil day. They cannot "take to the woods" at every arresting division. Sooner or later they will have to declare what principles and party they are prepared to support.

What is the particular evil with which this singular party stands charged? It is not that they supported the Prime Minister at the General Election. That may have been a political mistake—it is certainly not a political crime. The charge is that they acquiesced in the assassination of their Liberal comrades and the destruction of the Liberal Party in Parliament, without lifting a finger to aid the cause or their friends. Only through their acquiescence could the accursed "Coupon" system ever have been introduced into British politics. They accepted without protest this exploitation of a victory to which men of all parties had contributed. Mr. Lloyd George could not have continued without Liberal support. That Liberal support could have been obtained without the Coupon. The Coupon, indeed, was not used to gain Liberal support. It was used as an instrument of political vengeance. The duty of Coalitionist Liberal Members—especially Coalitionist Liberal Ministers—was to see that the Coupon was not used for political vengeance. They failed in that duty. They failed partly through cowardice and partly through selfishness.

Neither individually nor collectively did they protest against Tories being "couponed" into Liberal seats, and this not so much to elect the Tory as to eject the Liberal. If they "gained the whole world," they "lost their own souls." They have put fetters upon their necks, securely rivetted. They see themselves the "conscript appanage" of a triumphant Tory majority. That Tory majority has no particular use for them, and goes its own way, rejoicing. They sit in a House of Commons which prefers the small groups of Free Liberals and Labor members. They see in the result of the by-elections that the country has no use for them. Most of them are never likely to see another Parliament. Even if Toryism does not desert them, they will be ignominiously thrown out by Labor. "It is not that men are pained by the scorn of others, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel the kind of labor to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one."

And withal, they are cursed with a lack of distinction. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill stand apart. No one would venture to predict the future of the Prime Minister. Mr. Churchill, after many vicissitudes, has at last reached the haven where he would be. He is no longer troubled with the necessity of rendering even lip service to Liberal principles. He has settled down in the Tory Party to play with his soldiers. It is unlikely that he will ever start on his political travels again. It is more unlikely that any demand for his services will arise from any other political combination. But except for these two brilliant and wandering stars, what remains? In previous secessions which subsequently merged into Coalitions, the ability was not infrequently among the seceders. The brains of Toryism went with the Peelites, leaving behind Disraeli and an intellectual desolation. A conspicuous proportion of the brains of the older men left Liberalism on Home Rule. The ablest amongst older and younger men alike abandoned the Conservative Party when it declared for Protection. But small evidence of personal distinction, of administrative ability, of power of leadership, of enthusiasm for an ideal exists amongst the Liberal Coalitionists to-day. Nine-tenths of their members on the Front Bench would never have found themselves there, but for the need of keeping up the appearances of Liberalism in a "Coalition Government." And of their unofficial members in this Parliament few, if any, have shown promise for the future. Perhaps that promise is paralysed by the difficulty either of supporting or of opposing the monstrous majority in which they find themselves engulfed.

Small wonder that from the beginning a certain section of them has been pressing the representatives of Free Liberalism with projects for Liberal unity. But the basis of union must lie in mutual respect. And some suspicion of the origin of their movements is engendered by the fact that they are advanced, not by new members who feel the impossibility of their Parliamentary position, but by such politicians as Sir Henry Dalziel, who are the instruments of the Coalition's Parliamentary machine. The Liberals in Parliament have nothing to gain by such a *rapprochement*. They are small in numbers, but their number will be increased at every by-election; whereas it is unlikely that any Coalition Liberal candidate will be elected again. Liberalism can only welcome those who join it as free men to fight for Liberal principles. But no man has any right to call himself a Liberal member, who supports, or acquiesces in the support by his "leaders," of a Tory candidate, against a Liberal chosen by a Liberal Association. That at least is a test of which no honest man can complain. Let

all that is free amongst this anxious body publicly assert this position. Great freedom of individual opinion has always been tolerated in a Party which compels no one to any rigid formula. But a house divided against itself cannot stand.

#### GOVERNMENT BY BAROMETER.

THE worst kind of Government is the kind that refuses to govern. It is our national misfortune in this critical time to suffer under such a Government. If the present War Cabinet shows resolution in nothing else, it is at least exceeding resolute in refusing to make up its mind. At a time when wide vision and decisive action are as necessary as they were during the war, we are ruled, or unrulled, by men whose one thought is to gain time and avoid the necessity for coming to a decision. Thus, matters are allowed to drift, and the work of national reconstruction is indefinitely delayed.

At every turn, the Government endeavors either to avoid making any decision at all, or to shuffle off the responsibility for decision on to other shoulders. It cannot make up its mind whether to nationalize the mines: it puts the burden on the Coal Commission, and orders that body to decide in three weeks a huge question of policy upon which, after years of meditation, it has itself been unable to pronounce. It cannot make up its mind whether to nationalize the railways: it produces before Parliament a Bill which absolves it from the need of deciding at present, and confers upon it powers of autocratic action at any future time when it has succeeded in coming to a decision. A storm of protest arises: at once the Government withdraws the offending clause conferring autocratic power; but it does not make up its mind on the question of nationalization. Its spokesman, Sir Eric Geddes, makes a speech in Parliament which is acclaimed as a masterpiece of statesmanship. But the fact remains that Sir Eric Geddes leaves the public as much in the dark as ever in what is, after all, the main issue involved. So far as national ownership of industry is concerned, no one can say even now what the Government's policy may be.

It is the same with the Industrial Conference. Several Joint Committees of employers and Trade Unionists are now engaged, at the request of the Government, in formulating a programme of industrial legislation. This is an excellent thing, and may have very good results; but the chances of success would have been much greater if the Government had shown a greater sense of responsibility. The Cabinet called the Conference together, and then left it to its own devices, with no hint of the policy of industrial reconstruction which the Government itself would be prepared to adopt. Mr. George spoke to the Conference; but he dealt mostly in amiable generalities, giving no suggestion that the Government was conscious of its own responsibility for industry. In consequence, there is a common opinion abroad that the Conference was not convened for any other purpose than that of gaining time. To postpone the evil day of decision, to go on living from day to day beyond its income in the vague hope that something will turn up, to avoid offending powerful interests at the cost of delaying, or even wrecking, the whole work of reconstruction—this appears to be the present policy of the War Cabinet.

This is not government: it is futility. If this country is to escape the anarchy which has already submerged a considerable part of Europe,



it will be only by virtue of the courage and statesmanship which it can devote to the reconstruction of the economic system. If we are to embark upon such a policy, it is of the greatest moment that we should do so with our eyes open, and with a full consciousness of the issue involved. If we are to nationalize the mines and railways, let us do so because nationalization is the best policy, and not merely in order to find for Mr. George and his chorus the least undignified way out of an embarrassing situation. The Coal Commission has produced some excellent results. It has been the best piece of industrial education ever accomplished in so short a time. It has brought within the knowledge of the ordinary man facts which perhaps could not have reached him in any other way. If, however, the real object was that of giving the Government the best and most impartial advice on the question of mine nationalization and control, the position is very different. In the first place, the Commission consisted almost entirely of persons whose minds were made up in advance. A fortnight's hearing of evidence, most of which they knew already, even if the general public did not, was not likely to alter the opinion of any one of them. The Reports were therefore virtually written, so far as real expression of opinion goes, at the moment when the Commission was appointed. The complicating factor was that the Commissioners had to work under threat of an immediate strike, unless they reported in favor of nationalization. If, as we believe, national ownership is the right policy in the case of the mines, this threat may in fact help towards a right decision; but it is equally clear that if national ownership were the wrong policy, it would be just as helpful towards a wrong one. In fact, it looks as if the question of mine nationalization would be settled, not by its goodness or badness from the public point of view, but mainly by the relative economic strength of its advocates and opponents. The Government, being wholly without a policy itself, is dragged this way and that by the conflicting "economic pulls" of capitalistic and labor interests. It is frightened of offending the coalowners and of hurting the susceptibilities of owners generally; and it also fears to challenge the Miners' Federation and the Triple Industrial Alliance. When it makes up its mind, it does so under the influence not of argument but of panic. It is all a question of which seems to Mr. George the lesser evil at breakfast-time on Friday.

There may be people who regard such a form of Government as this implies as satisfactory or at least inevitable. It means that, instead of governing according to some definite conception of policy, the administration merely registers the respective pressures of each contending interest, and allows the strongest to have its own way. When M. Sorel was the intellectual leader of French Syndicalism, he used to preach very much the same doctrine. According to him, it did not matter who was in Parliament or who formed the Government, because both Parliament and the Government would be compelled to register the results of the economic pressure applied to them from outside. "On peut arracher directement les lois utiles"—"Laws that are useful can be forced by direct action." It is to this pass that our Government has come. We often accuse it of destroying the sovereignty of Parliament in order to accumulate force in the hands of the administration. It is true that the sovereignty of Parliament has been undermined, and that, in a formal sense, the power which Parliament has lost has passed into the hands of the administration. But, despite this transference, the administration is not stronger, but very much weaker

than before. For, although huge power is now formally wielded by the administration, in reality this power is passing into the hands of outside interests. The power which the Government is claiming is in truth not the power to act on its own responsibility and out of its own wisdom, but the power to register with less parliamentary interference the decrees of economic powers. When the Government asked for a blank cheque on railway nationalization, it was not because it intended to fill in the cheque in accordance with the best interests of the community; it was in order to ascertain and record the balance of power between the organised railway workers and the railway companies.

It may be, as some think, that this is the only possible method of government for a country in the condition in which we are now. It may be that we are so sharply divided into two rival economic camps that government without a policy is the only possible alternative to violent upheaval. It may be; but we do not believe it. The fact is that this form of government is the only sort that Mr. George understands, and that his Government, being a "one-man business," inevitably bears the stamp of his unstable personality. Mr. George has not, and has never had, a single constructive principle or conviction. What he has is agility, responsiveness to external stimuli, the faculty for quickly perceiving fluctuations in public pressure. He is not so much a statesman as a barometer. He climbed to power by a *coup d'état* and retained it by a General Election as meaningless as any since the Reform Act of 1832. But his success is due, above all else, to the fact that the situation is favorable for the time to a politician whose statecraft will be limited to the registration of extra-parliamentary "deals." This form of government, however, cannot last. Sooner or later, perhaps very soon, Mr. George will find that the interests with which he has to deal refuse to be balanced any longer, and that he has definitely to come down on one side or the other. When he does that, in whatever direction, he will be signing the death-warrant of his administration, which lives only upon a meaningless compromise with conflicting interests. He will have to make way for someone who has a broader and more constructive vision, whether his successor is drawn from the right or from the left.

Before these lines appear, Mr. George may have made his decision on the question of mining nationalization, or he may still be sitting on the fence and speaking, like Sir Eric Geddes, of "unified management" in the hope that the miners will think that he means national ownership, and the coalowners that he means a Trust. Such a game, however, cannot be kept up indefinitely, and sooner or later the Government will have to decide. The country is getting tired of these delays. Either Mr. George and his colleagues must now make up their minds to a definite policy, or they must go.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE situation in Paris, which fell to pieces when Mr. Wilson went away, has been at least partially restored now that he has returned. The object of a European Conference, said Lamennais, was to concert a crime which every nation had an equal interest in committing. But at least Paris has not been allowed to suffocate the

one germ of good in its work. This would have happened if Mr. Wilson had not insisted on incorporating the League in the preliminary draft. If it had disappeared it would never have been seen again. That was clearly M. Pichon's game. Equally clear was the President's determination to circumvent it. This he has done, with the obvious co-operation of Lord Robert Cecil, the one figure among our delegates of whose handiwork we have some right to be proud. The French are dubious and sarcastic, but they have given way again before the President's insistence on his point. In conflicts of structure and detail he is less successful; it is where the battle of wills is joined that he shines out so conspicuously as a man and a statesman.

WEST LEYTON is certainly a portent. It shows that "free" Liberalism is a power to be reckoned with, and that it is likely to destroy the Coupon system, and therefore to upset the whole balance of power in Mr. George's administration. The dilemma for him is sharp enough. If he goes on rationing the Tories at the expense of the Liberals, he will soon have every Liberal Association in the country against him. But if he refuses the coupon to the Tory candidate who merely seeks to replace a dead or a translated Tory member, he threatens the key of the Tory arch on which his own power rests. If he declines to distribute his coupon, will Mr. Law also consent to muzzle the ox that treads the Tory corn and keeps up the Tory corn law? And if no Government help is given to either candidate, how is the Government to recruit its forces, and to know who is for it and who against it? This is very distressing, for it seems to show that a total absence of principle occasionally puts the most accomplished equilibrist in a difficulty.

THE Ministerial position would seem, therefore, to be undermined. In effect the Liberal-Tory Coalition is doomed. The war was its only link, and now that is over, the internal differences of policy and temper tend to re-appear. The Liberals see that a Tory bureaucracy is in power, that it is hated, and yet that their function is merely to grind away in the Philistines' mill. The suggestion is that Mr. George has all along been a prophet of the Liberal revolt, that he saw it must destroy the Coalition, that he meant to meet that event half-way by openly reverting to Liberalism, and that the appearance of his land and housing programme (which Toryism will never accept) will give the necessary signal. So with Toryism in the cart the way is clear for reunion with Liberalism. How splendid! A little expensive perhaps, for it seemed hardly worth while to create a Tory majority of nearly 400 merely in order to "do it in" so soon. And it may be necessary to inquire whether if Mr. George re-embraces Liberalism, Liberalism will also enfold Mr. George. It is more likely, I think, to seek affinities with Labor. I doubt the reappearance of the old party system. No man can govern Britain without Labor, whether, like Mr. George, he seeks its co-operation in a series of appearing and dissolving Soviets, or whether we recur to the Constitution and to Parliamentary Government. But it is equally certain that Labor cannot govern by itself. The Parliamentary Labor Party is able and diligent enough in developing the policy of wages and hours. But it takes little part in high politics, does not even attend when all-important Estimates are under debate, and contributes but slightly to the formative and critical

work of our times. Liberalism will be wise to leave Mr. George alone. Its transaction is with Labor.

I AM afraid we shall hear more of the deportations of the leaders of Egyptian Nationalisers, especially of Said Pasha Zaghloul, a very able and instructed man, in no way (so far as I could judge when I saw him) disaffected to our rule. Deportations will not settle the Egyptian problem, which is simply our old friend "self-determination" over again. Why should it not be settled? Egypt behaved very well during the war. She was loyal and helpful to the Allies. She furnished excellent soldiers, competent labor battalions. How long are we to defer the execution of the four things we ought long ago to have given her—a Code, a Constitution, and a Parliament, the reform of the Capitulations, and a reformed University? The best of our Civil Service lament the delay, and do not believe it possible to govern Egypt by merely prolonging it and dodging every fresh wave of discontent with what is always a mere provisional militarism. And now comes down this soldier's ukase, with riots, shootings, the resignation of a friendly Minister, and the discredit of our case in Europe as its inevitable sequel. What does Sir Reginald Wingate think of it? This practice on the Nile compares ill with the doctrine of the Seine.

SOME not impertinent curiosity has been stirred over the Wilson-Clemenceau-Orlando address to Mr. George. Why "Dear Prime Minister"? Mr. George is not Mr. Wilson's Prime Minister (at least I have not heard that we have been annexed to the United States), or M. Clemenceau's, or Signor Orlando's. Only an Englishman could address him in such a character. Then, was the original written in English? But in any case the setting is inappropriate even to a desperate appeal to Mr. George to save the world before the Empire. The gesture asked of him was universal; the address merely domestic. The speculations of the curious exhaust themselves in the problem, but they find no solution.

THE true worth of a bishop is never so clearly revealed as on those rare occasions on which Christianity shows a tendency to get the upper hand and to obstruct statesmanship. Such a danger was to be apprehended at some stage or another of the European famine, and it has rather developed since, following the Bishop of London's wise suggestion that we might venture to feed our enemies, provided the soldiers agreed to it, the soldiers, not I hope with the object of embarrassing a Bishop in a difficulty, promptly said that we ought and must. Since then the voice of London has been silent, but Bishop Frodsham, who is, I think, something in the Colonies, has hastened to the rescue. Bishop Frodsham has been in Germany since the armistice, and is therefore able to contradict the rumor that any considerable number of people are "dying in the streets of the occupied towns." It will be a relief to us all to know that they are only dying in their homes, and a greater relief still to hear from the Bishop that, though the German children, "in cases," looked "anæmic," "they were not lifeless." There, I imagine, it is not the good Bishop's heart which is at fault so much as his method of investigation. If he wanted to see "lifeless" children, he should have sought

them, not in the streets, but in the mortuaries of hospitals, where they may apparently be seen in sufficiently large numbers. However, this is a detail. The point is to have some corrective to the effeminate sentimentalism of the soldier. And here it is.

It seems quite inadequate to say of Mr. George Russell that London has lost its only great gossip, but I cannot help saying it. After all, it is not wicked to be a gossip; and, to take one of his uses, how could history be written without gossip? Or how could people in one class of society know anything of any other? Certainly Mr. Russell was wonderfully equipped. He had a prodigious memory. He never forgot a story, and he simply could not see anybody without reproducing a perfect caricature of him. His Gladstone was, I think, the best of these innumerable memory-portraits, the best because Russell knew, loved, and understood him so well. These sketches really gave you the whole Gladstone personality—his deep, gruff tones and indignant apostrophes, his simplicity, his sophistry, his prejudices and limitations, the splendid but puzzling apparatus of his mind and conversation. They were not without malice, for malice was Russell's sense of fun, the spice of the continual amusement he found in life. He had fewer tales of Jowett; and none that I remember of Matthew Arnold, whom he knew and loved much (though in religion the two men were miles apart), whom he continually quoted and chuckled over, and commended to all the world.

This cynical wit, this aristocrat, this accomplished worldling, was also a Radical (he hated being called a Whig), a Socialist of the sentimental school, and, above all, a devout, adoring Christian, constant in the prayers and offices of the Church, in lay preachings, in pious thoughts and aspirations. Like Gladstone, he was an English Catholic, at once Evangelical and "High." That and his kind-heartedness, and affectionate curiosity about rising talent and aspiring youth, were the spiritual side of him. The two currents flowed side by side through his nature, and never seemed to mix. A clubman and a *dévo*t! Well, there have been many such contradictions—life is full of them. But Russell was almost a classic example.

A LETTER from a correspondent suggests that a reference to Mr. Churchill in my last week's letter contained a reflection on his personal gallantry. No man who ever knew the Secretary for War would fall into so absurd a misrepresentation of him, and I certainly did not. The reference was entirely (and obviously) to the propriety of his quick exchange of a military for a political career.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### THE QUESTION.

AFTER all, we may say bravely, these years of war have shattered our illusions. We may not be, we certainly are not, happy as we once were; we do not know in what we believe, and we do not care to look into the matter too closely, for fear that we should find in the recesses

something which we do not care to look upon, much less own as ours. But still, though we do not believe in life as we once did, life takes care of itself. She is like a beautiful woman whose caprice has wrecked our youth, whose denial has made our manhood unprofitable, but to whom even in our old age, and in spite of our own self-contempt, we are bound to pay our court. Moths round the candle-flame, we know; but moths will be moths. And a new generation will arise which will find our mistress as beautiful as she was once in our eyes, before her girlish charm changed into the fascination of a *femme fatale*. True, we are not very heroic, according to the general notion; but then not even Spinoza is counted a hero yet. We have at least the merit of knowing more or less exactly what we are. We have no illusions, and we go on living. It is not a very edifying epitaph, but it has its points and its secret satisfactions.

You mean, he said, that on the whole the discomfort of having no illusions is roughly balanced by your being spared the disappointment of having them slowly whittled away. You find a catastrophe no worse than the contagion of the world's slow stain. I wonder whether it is really as satisfactory to grow grey during a night as to pass naturally into senility. Aren't you perhaps being brave because you have to be?

I have never, I said, been able to admit any other reason for bravery. And anyhow I don't claim to be brave. On the contrary, I suggested pretty plainly that it was my business to break with the lady. If you like, the Stoic accent in my resignation was merely to cover a *nostalgie de la boue*. Besides, I said in so many words that I was not heroic. If I choose to make that admission heroically—well, I never claimed that the war had destroyed our poses as well as our illusions.

No . . . of course, he said slowly, and after a pause resumed. I wonder what is the precise difference between poses and illusions. . . . But the point is, I take it, that here we are and we must make the best of it. When the clouds of glory have begun to wear very thin, it's a good thing to declare that we have always regarded them as obsolete encumbrances. I understand. But do you really like the utter nakedness?

There's no question of liking or disliking, I said. I cannot admit it. It would only be admissible if I were prepared to break with the lady. Even if it's a question of more or less enthusiasm for her, I could hardly reply. She remains unique. I did not know she was so cruel; I could not have believed she would be so utterly hard. But now that I do know, all that I have it in me to say is that I know a little more about the secret of her fascination.

But would you have her otherwise, he persisted, if you could?

There is, I said, something in me which desires, above all things, to know the truth; it is glad when the veil of illusion is torn away, and proud to acquiesce in all that it knows of necessity. The fact that life is terrible, that men cannot or will not understand the horror of another's bodily pain, the impotence or the infinitesimal and precarious power of the ideal, the savagery that lurks within men's hearts—all these things which I was not compelled to believe and therefore did not believe are now become part of my truth. If you ask me or this part of me whether I would have the truth otherwise, I can only reply that it is not even a possible question. Now that life has been revealed to us as a thing more cruel than we had imagined, we cannot turn and say that life has changed. We know that there is no variableness in her, though there may be more cruelty at one moment and more kindness at another, for we understand that the cruelty is the condition of her kindness,



and the kindness of her cruelty. We were boy-lovers; our infatuation clothed her with a candid innocence which is but partly hers. Now we are men, and see her as she really is. She is not less wonderful than she was, because we do not trust her any more; nor indeed do we love her less, because we have learned she has no heart. In truth we love her more; where we loved her carelessly in the old days, we now love desperately. The truth has a compulsion of its own to a part of our being, and to ask this part whether it would have the truth otherwise is to ask a question without meaning, for nothing other than the truth can have the ruthless and transparent quality which alone can claim and receive its homage. This part of us cries aloud that though we may be discomfited we cannot be deceived. If it has cost a million lives to reveal the truth, it cannot protest at the sacrifice, because it knows that the sacrifice was not made in order that the truth might be discovered. (If it had been, the truth itself would have been different.) These bitter years are only four years of life. They seemed so bitter because we had been lulled into an illusion and fondly believed that life was other than it is.

You have become a fatalist, he said.

No, I have not. It is true that we accept the thing that has been. We receive the truth which it contains, and think it unworthy of ourselves to palliate or diminish its hardness. We see that it could not have been otherwise since we and other men with us were what we were; and in so far as we see that it must have been, we are masters of our destiny. The tribulation could have been less terrible, the years could have been shortened, but the plane of possibility where these things might have been true is not one where the minds of most men inhabit. It is not that life is more cruel than we imagined, but that men are. And even here our discomfiture is mitigated by our knowledge that in spite of all momentary withdrawal we desire to live in the world of men as they are, and not in an imaginary kingdom peopled by the creatures of our brain. Not least because we were content in the old days in a world of unreal men has this disaster overtaken us. We have the truth; we are not happy, but we are content.

But are you content? he asked.

With this part of myself, I am. But there is another part which counts the cost. It cries out against the suffering, and will not be comforted. To the question whether it would have these years otherwise, it can only reply: anything but what has been. What have we gained by the destruction of our illusions? Most men will live on their old illusions, and the few, among whom we count ourselves, who have lost them all, will create for themselves new ones. We have learned what men are, how powerless is their reason and how feeble and lukewarm their sympathy; we recognize that we resembled them and, it may be, we are determined to keep our sympathy quick and our instincts disciplined. But the moment will come when, even if we are not renegade to our determination, we shall weary of seeing in men what they really are, and we shall see them perfect instead of perhaps perfectible. We shall count promise for performance in ourselves and in others, simply because that is the easier way. Indeed, the only way to live is by recreating an illusion.

The gain is at best precarious; more probably it is imaginary. What we have lost stands firm and unalterable. We will not reckon lives. Let us take the stoic part and declare that death cometh soon or late, even though we know that the part ill becomes us who find no less fascination in a life in which the gold has dimmed to grey; let us hold fast to the one unshakeable fact that never before in the history of the world has so great a mass of evil been nakedly manifest. For pain is the one indubitable evil that we know. Nothing can obliterate the mountain of suffering which has been endured. The millennium itself could not compensate for it; not even if the pain were voluntarily sought and, so far as deliberate will could secure it, gladly endured. Even with these few there was the moment when the fiercest will failed before the bodily agony. And of the whole how many were there who suffered willingly? No glorious future, no splendid purpose achieved can ever

justify these hecatombs of pain. They are adamant and elemental; they cannot be resolved into anything other than themselves, naked, unforgettable evil. Therefore when resignation has slowly scattered its balm upon wounded memory, when determination has steeled itself to shape the world anew, we should still make heard our unavailing cry that the years and the pain of the years should be blotted out.

M.

#### AN ANSWER.

By publication of the "German Workers' Decalogue," the *Vorwärts* recalls to the memory of Europe a time of revolution like our own. In that year the fallen crowns of kings and princes strewed the ground almost as thick as the fallen crowns of last year and the year before. Hunger had blighted the nations, and the worst of famine had fallen upon a part of our own Disunited Kingdom as hostile and despised as Central Europe is now, and even less familiar and further removed from English knowledge. Then also the wretchedness of the common workman's life had been partially revealed, and the working peoples had risen to the resolve that the price of comfort and "civilization" among the other classes should no longer be wrung from them. It was a time of shattering upheaval, dimly illuminated by hope. It was then that the American prophet cried:—

"Suddenly, out of its stale and drowsy lair, the lair of slaves,  
Like lightning it leapt forth half-startled at itself,  
Its feet upon the ashes and the rags, its hands tight to  
the throat of kings.

O hope and faith!

O aching close of exiled patriots' lives!

O many a sickened heart! Turn back unto this day and  
make yourselves afresh."

The "Manchester Guardian," in publishing a translation of the Workers' Decalogue of those times, introduces it with a rather strange historic note. It says:—

"There was then no powerful capitalistic bourgeoisie, and no class-conscious proletariat as there is now. Industrial Germany was very backward, and modern economic reasoning was replaced by moral and ethical reflections rooted in the natural healthy instincts of mankind."

It is perhaps true that capital was not then so powerful as it has since become, though there were fewer restrictions on its power. Certainly German industry was not then so highly developed as it had become before the war. Modern economic reasoning has also grown and taken more rigid and abstract forms. But we cannot agree that its most dogmatic and abstract principles have in reality replaced those "moral and ethical reflections rooted in the natural healthy instincts of mankind." To take the latest possible instance: to what has the miners' appeal in the evidence before the recent Commission been made? Chiefly to the claim of the miners as ordinary human beings to a decent manner of life, to habitable houses, sufficient food, and to freedom from such hours of toil as enthrall and brutalize the human spirit? On the miners' side, such claims have lain at the bottom of all their modern economic reasoning, and may they not fairly be called "moral and ethical reflections rooted in the natural healthy instincts of mankind?" Let us rapidly consider these Ten Commandments handed down from the workers of seventy years ago.

The two first Commandments, like the two first of the Mosaic Decalogue, are very closely connected. The first begins with "Thou shalt work," and the second is an order not to tolerate the idler. "He who does not work shall not eat. So it is written," says the first. The appeal to Scripture may sound a little old-fashioned to "modern economic reasoning"; but among our working people that appeal is still confidently, though rather pathetically, made. "And yet," the Commandment goes on, "many eat who do not work." Yes; they do still, and that disobedience to Scripture lies at the root of nearly all our economic troubles. The second Commandment orders the workman to give the

idler a jerkin and a hoe, and to say, "Now work, thou wealthy idler." But how the obedient workman is to carry out that most salutary injunction is a difficult problem, though the Bolsheviks are trying, in their violent manner, to solve it.

The Third and Fourth Commandments also run together, and their objects are as vital now as ever. "Thou shalt not do the work of a slave," says the Third. "Thou shalt demand a righteous wage for thy work," says the Fourth. Here, again, there is perhaps an old-fashioned tone about the reasons given in each. "All men are equal and free. No man is born a slave"—it sounds a little like Rousseau's "Social Contract." "Thy work must suit thy powers and desires, and it must not oppress thy spirit and weary thy body." Certainly, it should not! If only the work of each suited his powers and desires, and did not oppress his spirit, the world would be filled with joy and the gospel proclaimed by Ruskin, William Morris, and all our finest economic teachers would be accomplished. "There shall be no more slaves in this world except machines, and these shall be the slaves of mankind." Well, we suppose there are people whose powers and desires are best suited to running the machines, though the man who does it, whether the machine is a steam-engine or a Government, is too likely to become a machine himself. And then as to wages, the Fourth Commandment goes on: "Those who deprive thee of thy righteous wage, and make of thee a beast of burden, to them say, 'It is not I but you who make bad times. Because of your greed, your insatiable covetousness, your mad competition, times are bad. There must be an end to that.'" Yes, certainly, there must be an end to that. It is what all Socialists have been saying for more than seventy years.

The Fifth and Sixth Commandments deal with what we now call conditions. "Thou shalt not suffer hunger"; "Thou shalt not walk in torn clothing"; so they run. The reasons given from the analogies of nature do perhaps sound to us a little antiquated and untrue. "Sparrows do not die of hunger; worms get sufficient; fishes never starve." Unhappily, the struggle of nature for subsistence extends far below the animal called mankind. Nor is it exactly true that without effort "the violets on the meadows, and the roses in the gardens, have shimmering raiment"; or that the birds wear a bright dress, and the bear has a warm coat. Yet we have heard the words, "Consider the lilies how they grow," and we have heard of the sparrows, two of which are sold for a farthing. As to the other reasons—"Dost thou not till the fields; do not thy crops ripen; dost thou not bake thy bread? Why shouldst thou hunger? Hast thou not woven the king's purple robe? Why shouldst thou walk in rags?"—how familiar they sound to us who were nursed on the hymns which sang:—

"Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?"

Or again:—

"We plow and sow, we're so very, very low,  
That we delve in the dirty clay;  
Till we bless the plain with the golden grain,  
And the vale with the fragrant hay.  
Our place we know, we're so very, very low,  
'Tis down at the landlord's feet:  
We're not too low the grain to grow,  
But too low the bread to eat."

The Seventh Commandment deals with the final aim of man's existence. "Thou shalt enjoy thy life," it says; "It is the purpose of life that man should be happy." Most people will agree; the difficulty comes with the definition of enjoyment and happiness. This arises at once with the very next sentence of the Commandment: "Hast thou done all that is necessary for the preservation and glorification of human life?" How few could say "Yes" to that question! And of those few, which could speak of enjoyment or happiness in their own lives, without an uncommon definition of the words? What kind of enjoyment or happiness has been the reward of those who have done most for the preservation and glorification of human life? We all know their

lot has been unpopularity, hatred, contempt, suffering, poverty, failure, betrayal, imprisonment, torture, and death. We need not go to bygone history for instances of their reward. Every age supplies instances, and our own age is thick with them as the autumn with fallen leaves. Of course, one might, by paradox, extend the meaning of enjoyment and happiness so as to include their apparent pain. But "Thou shalt enjoy thy life!"—is that a Commandment which they can be said to have obeyed?

The Eighth Commandment is easier to accept without interpretation. "Thou shalt live in honor. No man shall stand above thee and mock thee with 'Worker, ignorant worker, poor worker!'" Thou shalt say to them whom hitherto thou hast nourished with the sweat of thy brow: "Idlers, poor idlers. I forgive you all you have done against me. I offer you my brotherly hand. You, too, shall live in honor by your work."

All but the idlers would agree with that Commandment, though the extension of the brotherly hand might be a little difficult; but what is the need of a Commandment unless it is difficult to obey? The Ninth Commandment, in England at all events, would certainly sound a little obsolete to "modern economic reasoning." It runs:—

"Thou shalt close thine ear to the priest. The tree of knowledge is the tree of life. The priests, who desire to do nothing and yet to live and revel, frighten thee away from the tree of knowledge. They say: 'Not here shalt thou rejoice, but beyond. Here thou shalt suffer; on high thou shalt be rewarded.' And they offer a mirage in order to enjoy the reality themselves. But thou shalt know that the right to live is also the right to be happy, to be happy here below."

This Commandment, as we say, sounds to most of us rather obsolete. Comparatively few of our priests do nothing, and perhaps still fewer revel. Some do still hold out the consolations of futurity as a soothing medicine for the poor. Some do proclaim any doctrine but the simple messages of Christ. But many labor as devotedly for the preservation and glorification of human life as anyone else among us, and so the Commandment may seem a little otiose. For either the priest is now recognised as a good sort of fellow in his way, or the ear is already closed to him, and his existence is ignored.

Of the Tenth Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," there is no more to be said, for that is half the law and the prophets. "Who is my neighbor?" was the ancient question, and we all know the definite answer that was made. "Hate and envy divide, but love unites," the Workers' Commandment continues. It is true—true to satiety. But for years past the enormous majority in this country as well as in the rest of the civilized world, led by the enormous majority of our priests, have been violently breaking this Commandment, truism though it is. And if we seek a monument to a Commandment thus shattered in pieces, we have but to look around us. Yet, pathetic as these "moral and ethical reflections rooted in the natural instincts of mankind" are to read after seventy years of failure, we would not part from them without hope of their continued and inspiring force. For we remember the fate of those too quick despairers who lay fixed in the black mud of the Fifth Circle's Stygian bog, where Dante saw them breathing up bubbles through the melancholy slime.

N.

#### WANTED, MORE NATIONAL WEALTH.

Most working people are firmly convinced that the wealth annually produced in this country is ample to enable everyone to live comfortably provided it were properly distributed. Therefore all the statements about the need for more productivity in which our newspapers and public men indulge so freely irritate them very much. "What," they say, "is the use of telling us there isn't enough wealth produced, when the Government has been able to find eight millions a day to spend upon the war, and profiteers, great and small, have been flaunting their new golden wealth in every town and village of the kingdom?" Even thoughtful persons,



aware that much of this prosperity reflects high-money incomes without any corresponding increase of real wealth, and, knowing that half our foreign properties have gone towards paying for the war, are led by the riot of waste and luxury to the same judgment. Now, Professor Bowley's pamphlet, "The Division of the Product of Industry" (Clarendon Press), presents an analysis of the national income before the war which directly contravenes this judgment. No one who knows Professor Bowley, or is able to follow his closely-reasoned statistical argument, will suspect him of any attempt to "make a case," and therefore his conclusions are likely to carry considerable weight in the great controversy that is slowly thrusting itself to the forefront of the public mind—viz., the question whether we are producing or can produce enough wealth to satisfy the legitimate demands of the wage-earners.

It may be well here to put in evidence some leading figures from Dr. Bowley's pamphlet. The aggregate income of the people of the United Kingdom derived from home sources, he reckons to have been between 2,000 and 2,100 millions in 1913. So far as expenditure is concerned, there might be added some 200 millions more derived from foreign sources. But, for our present purpose, the distribution of our national product, this ought to be ignored. Next, by applying the usually accepted tests, he concludes that about one-half of the home-made income was earned by wage-earners and other small working people with an annual income below £160, and that, when allowance is further made for old-age pensions and receipts from small properties, "we find nearly 60 per cent. of the whole in the hands of this group." Then, taking the other 40 per cent., or 742 millions, as forming the income of the income-tax paying classes, he proceeds to cut down to the figure of £160 per annum all the earned incomes that contribute to this sum, putting on that £160 basis active employers, professional men, farmers, and all salaried employees. This allowance for bare livelihood would leave some 550 millions as "an outside estimate of the amount of home-produced income that is the target of attack by extreme Socialists." But, out of this 550 millions has to come the greater part of the national savings and also of the public revenue, leaving a sum of only 200 or 250 millions.

"This sum would have little more than sufficed to bring the wages of adult men and women up to the minimum of 35s. 3d. for a man and 20s. for a woman, which Mr. Rowntree, in 'The Human Needs of Labor,' estimates as reasonable."

Here is the case, quite fairly argued, so far as we can judge. What is to be said about it? Well, our first comment is to the effect that it proves rather too much. For, if out of the 550 millions surplus the proper contribution towards savings on the one hand and public expenditure upon the other is deducted, nothing will be left. For, before the war, most statisticians regarded 400 millions as a minimum figure for the aggregate annual savings, and almost the whole of this must have come out of unearned income or earned incomes over £160, while at least three-quarters of the Imperial taxation must be allocated to the same sources, not to mention such part of the local rates as falls on real estate and business income. But it is generally admitted that, whether Dr. Bowley's 250 millions is or is not a fair measure of the surplus, some considerable surplus is attested by the existence of the 30,000 super-tax income payers and the far larger category of the merely well-to-do. We strongly suspect that an important neglected factor is the quantity of income of the well-to-do business classes that evades assessment for income class. Some allowance is generally made for this item, but shrewd and well-informed persons who mix in circles of dubious integrity are agreed that whole classes of business-men habitually and largely understate their incomes, while other classes of traders, farmers, small but successful shopkeepers and other negligent bookkeepers, virtually escape assessment. We should not be surprised if the amount of income that thus escapes amounted not to millions or even tens of millions, but to at least a hundred millions. Only by some such improbable surmise can we make the orthodox statistics square into the known facts of the situation.

But whether this conjecture be sound or not, we cannot doubt the general accuracy of Dr. Bowley's conclusion, viz., that the amount of annual income capable of diversion from rents, profits and high salaries into wages is much smaller than the workers commonly believe, and that no labor movement can succeed in building out of it a standard of life for all the wage-earners that is really satisfactory. For, as he points out, whatever computation be taken for this surplus, only a part of it is directly available for addition to wages.

"A great part of the profits arises from professions and occupations to the production of which wage-earners contribute very little, and another part is due to special skill of management, and to partial monopoly, the excess of which profits is not due to the workers who help to make them. These sums can be reached by taxation, but are not available for the direct increase of wages."

In other words, the very concentration of riches in the hands of a relatively small class has bred an illusion with regard to their aggregate size. Some 10 per cent. of the total national income, squandered by super-men and super-women in motor cars, yachts, fine houses, expensive clothes and jewels, fashionable restaurants and the like, has advertized, dramatized, mal-distributed so effectively as to persuade men and women to whom statistics are unmeaning that there was enough and more than enough to go round and make everybody happy. Now this was not the case in 1913, and it is still less the case at the present time.

We are aware that it is very little good for professional or business men or any members of the well-to-do classes to preach "more productivity." Yet we are equally convinced that the workers must be weaned from the illusion that all that is wanted is better distribution of existing wealth. Their own intelligent and trusted leaders must tell them this unpalatable truth, if they are to believe it. And after all, it need not be unpalatable. For more productivity should not mean what it has meant during war-time, long hours, speeding up, and more pressure on the workers. High productivity can be, and should be, made compatible with less pressure upon the individual worker. For there are other sources of high productivity than the sweat and strain of working men. Some of these have been revealed by the industrial emergencies of war. The quantity of useful goods and services which constituted the real income of 1913 might have been twice as great, with no added tax on labor, if the industrial system had been worked with more intelligent economy of mechanical and human resources. The unemployment which figured in Board of Trade returns, considerable though it was in normal times, was not one of the biggest wastes. To it must be added the habitual under-employment of large masses of workers in the less organized trades. Still larger was the waste of labor and capital employed in the needless multiplication of distributive businesses, wholesale and retail, and the myriads of overlapping and competing businesses and agencies connected with the competitive side of industry, commerce, and finance. Again, we are now beginning to realize that such highly organized industries as railroads, mining, banking and insurance, have been conducted in a spirit of ruthless extravagance, involving waste that could be measured in hundreds of thousands of workers.

Add to the new economies contemplated in such services the public use of labor-saving machinery and plant, together with the organization not merely of single businesses, but of whole trades and industrial areas for purposes of common supplies of energy, transport, and marshalling, and we begin to realize what is possible in the way of labor within productivity. This will not, and indeed should not, be regarded as a substitute for redistribution of wealth. Such reforms, indeed, cannot be made effective unless it is made certain that the lion's share of the enlarged income can be secured for the people. There will be a struggle here. For improved organization under the hitherto prevailing industrial system has played into the hands of monopoly. Here the State must step in and here the labor movement must come into line with political democracy. For, as Dr. Bowley shows, much surplus wealth, which is not easily



divertible into wages, is within the reach of the tax-gatherer, and can be utilized for the productive social services by which the new State may enrich the life of the community. This process of taxation is an integral part of the better distribution of wealth, which should go hand in hand with enlarged productivity. Once set the worker free from the bugbear of unemployment, give him security of well-paid work and livelihood, and he will rid himself rapidly of the old illusion that increased productivity is inimical to his interests. For increased earnings, with regular employment, should mean steady and enlarged demand for commodities, and this large healthy home market will, in its turn, stimulate production, and, keeping the bulk of the productive resources of the country for home use, will greatly mitigate those fluctuations in volume of output, prices and employment, for which excessive competition for foreign markets was responsible in recent decades. This is the circuit of sane productive energy pulsing through the industrial system of a nation in which high production, equitable distribution and sound consumption are all harmonised.

## Short Studies.

### OUR KITCHEN.

FROM the deep, open fireplace, with its high mantelpiece, rays penetrated the shadows of the kitchen; here and there caught by the polished copper pans and brass kettles, and reflected by the pewter covers in which one could see such weird, distorted pictures.

A large table could have stood comfortably in the chimney-corner, and the fireplace itself was so wide that when the iron sheet for the purpose was moved up with a crank to the centre, and a fire built in one half of the grate, the heat was sufficient to do the cooking for a large family.

A bar projected out of the mysterious darkness above, and from it would be hung the shining brass jack which the cook wound up with a key. Turkeys and haunches of venison turned just as merrily as did sirloins of beef and legs of mutton. With each revolution of the spit there was a click. "Hurry, hurry," said the cook to the scullery-maid when the clicks came less and less often. From time immemorial, as history tells us, it has been the duty of that minion, male or female, to watch the bird or joint which is browning. The gravy dropped into a pan, which stood, knee high, on its own legs. How we envied that fortunate scullery-maid as she scooped it up with a long-handled ladle. A "screen" was pushed up to keep off the draughts. It was a sort of backless cupboard, zinc lined to catch the heat, and the dishes on its shelves would be piping hot when dinner was ready.

Was this the only cooking arrangement? Oh, no! On one side of the kitchen there was a long dresser. The front, which was of brick, had arches built in it, and over them were little square doors—lift the deal top and you found a row of charcoal grates, such as have been used in parts of Europe since the fifteenth century at least, and are still in use in many of the old Italian houses.

On the open shelves of a real dresser stood the remains of a Spode dinner service, finding honorable rest on account of its missing members.

A grandfather clock in a corner was extra busy, for it told the days of the months, as well as the hours, minutes, and seconds. On its brass face were carved figures representing the seasons.

The square, red bricks of the floor gave a touch of color; the fitches of bacon and rows of plum puddings, one for each birthday in the year, and extra for great days, with here a string of onions and there a bunch of herbs, told of foresightedness if not of plenty.

In an English kitchen—with the exception of those of flat buildings—no washing-up is done. That work is divided between the pantry and scullery, and the preparation of vegetables and other dirty tasks are relegated to the latter cold but useful annex. Even cottages of the humblest type

have their sculleries—an arrangement which makes the kitchen more habitable if it has to be lived in.

This scullery had a history which ought to have provided the house with a ghost story, though only the end of it came to light, which rather leads one to think that ghosts do not walk unless their sad stories are known.

Two little nameless graves stood just on the other side of the wall that separated the churchyard from the house. I do not think any of the busy children who lived there ever passed those little wooden crosses without a feeling of pity and friendliness in their generally thoughtless little hearts. Years before repairs had been needed in the scullery, and digging down to the foundations the workmen came upon the remains of two children. The oldest inhabitant could remember no story that threw any light upon the matter; there was no mention of them in the parish registers.

It was thought that perhaps the ground on which the scullery stood might once have been part of the churchyard; but such places are more likely to take in that which adjoins them than to give up any ground, and this one had never ceased to grow, being still in use as a burial ground. It is more likely that they were the bodies of unbaptized children to whom some narrow-minded "divine" had denied the right of burial in holy ground. But, of course, they might have been the victims of an assassin. The deed, good or bad, could not have been more recent than a century, and all that time no heart-broken parent, or remorseful man, assassin or divine, failed to sleep in peace—neither did their exhumation and reburial cause any uneasiness in the spirit world.

Every morning and afternoon the old gardener, who had worked on the place, man and boy, for seventy years, and the equally old yard-man came in for their "11 o'clock" and their "4 o'clock." They sat always on the same chairs; and put their hats always on the same two bricks beside them.

They looked a little like "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" thought "Missy," and was at once ashamed of seeing the likeness, for was not one her own dear old Hight, who was never tired of telling her how he was the first villager to hold her as a tiny baby? She liked to stand up against his fustian knee; he smelt of the earth and flowers he worked amongst. His cheeks were wrinkled and rosy as apples, and his jacket and waistcoat seemed, somehow, like the moss-grown bark of a tree.

She was always pressed to taste the foaming glass of home-brewed beer as it was handed to him; a very nauseous draught to her mind; she had sipped it once, and to do it again was too great a test for even that friendship; it hurt her to refuse, for she knew, though it was not put into words, that her doing so made it the sweeter to him; and it needed sweetening so sadly!

Once a year the brewer arrived—a big man who wore an apron. He brought most of his paraphernalia with him. The big copper, which was built in a corner of the brewhouse, was cleaned the day before. It was seldom the top was taken off, and the opportunity of getting a peep into its ruddy depths must not be lost.

The brewer in his apron stood at the top of three stone steps by its side, and he stirred and stirred with his long stick. He seemed like some High Priest performing rites in connection with a sacrifice. Then out he ladled the steaming liquid—libations to the gods—which ran from vat to vat through wooden troughs.

For days the delightful odour of malt and hops pervaded the air. How strange that anything which smelt so good should taste so nasty!

How sorry we were when the brewing was over and the beer in the huge casks, which stood on stone emplacements in the cellar.

How large, and silent, and sombre they seemed down there in the dim half-light. One could almost imagine it a kind of Stonehenge, having never seen that historical monument. Did Lavengro, I wonder, have any greater feeling of awe when he saw the great stones grow out of the mist that early morning?

Gloomy as that cellar was it was a light and cheery apartment to the two beyond. They were in the old part of the house, which was built in the seventeenth century. That which was known as the "new part" being then eighty years old. The thick walls and heavy doors, with their big

locks and keys, and the total darkness, made it quite unnecessary to draw on the imagination when picturing a dungeon. Delicious thrills travelled up and down one's spine when permitted to accompany our father to them—I do not think we should have cared to go with any person of less importance—and one made use of a piece of his coat if his hands were occupied. The candle threw a fitful light, and often the corners would be quite in the dark as he stooped down to look for some particular bottle. The bins and bottles seemed to be unreal; one felt sure that there was a "Manacled Wretch" upon a "bed of filthy straw" in the corner; one listened for the rattle of his chain as he raised himself on his elbow. One heaved a sigh of relief as the door was closed, and the outer cellar seemed quite pleasant by contrast. How dreadful it would be if one got shut in there by accident! No one could possibly hear you.

For half an hour or so the thought of the poor wretch troubled you, and when you finally shook him off you felt that you had set a spirit free.

In the hot weather the outer cellar was used as a larder. The village butcher only killed once a week, and if the winter had been mild there was no ice in the round, thatched ice-house, which was so much like a South Sea Islander's hut, with only the roof above ground, for we depended, as most people did in those days, upon our own supply.

One year the tenants' supper was fixed for Monday; 40 lbs. of beef hung in the cellar, for the guests included the allotment holders. The cook did not notice when she went down for the Sunday joint that one of the dogs, a large retriever, went with her. Riot liked the cool of the cellar and the prospect it afforded of living up to his name—he did not return with her.

Two hours afterwards an angry and indignant bark was heard from behind the door. Having eaten all he could and mauled what he could not, the faithful and intelligent beast was objecting to being shut in a dark place without any water. And no more meat to be had in the village!

The stable-yard was extensive. Two clumps of lime trees, when in bloom, filled the air with their perfume and the humming of bees. In winter the harness-room was a popular spot, for it had a round stove that made it very comfortable and was very handy for the making of bullets—a fascinating process to watch. There was also a box of feathers which the cats would select as the place for their accouchements; their much talked of maternal instincts filled many a nameless grave in consequence.

Over the apple and root houses was a granary, and beyond that a workshop with a lathe and nice white chips all over the floor—to get to it you passed, in a rather dim light, between two rows of bins. You could see inside by standing on tip-toe, but could not reach any of the wonderful lumber with which they were piled. There had been no grain there for years, but the place still smelt of it, that nice smell that suggests millers with sacks on their backs.

In one corner an old tithe barn took up a good deal of room, but always repaid exploration. It gave their name, of course, to all the commoner fowls, as do all the barns of children with fowls. That was the least of its wonders.

Half of it had a second story which was open to the other half, like the stable in some of the pictures of the Nativity, only in them a good deal of light seems to fall from somewhere in to the loft. You could see very little of what was in this one from the floor, whether you stood near or far off in the corner, and if anyone ever went up into it they were very sly about it and hid the ladder which no search ever revealed. It and its contents were veiled in the most delightful mystery and the densest of cobwebs, which hung, and swung, and floated in the draughts as the festoons of grey moss do from the oak-trees of Louisiana.

Bats flew about in the capacious roof, and even an owl was once said to have made her nest there. Imagine if you can the grief of having such a treasure-house snatched from you before you had half exhausted its possibilities, and converted into a clean, light, airy, and tiresome—infant school! Looking back one wonders how one lived through it—but it had to be.

The village school had become too small for the population, and the barn was offered. The sacrifice brought a recompense as all pain is said to do—the infants, it was found, would only require a half; we might have the other

for a tennis-court—and a very good single, inside court it made.

But the poor rats and the owls and the spiders which were put into mourning by the reformation, what was their recompense, one wonders?

MARY GRANVILLE.

## The Drama.

### SHERIDAN AT THE COURT.

"The School for Scandal." By Richard Binsley Sheridan.

To visit the Court is to meet the ghosts of John Tanner and Booth Voysey and Captain Brassbound and the other characters let loose upon that tiny stage in the far-off days when English comedy attempted to assert itself against the growing tragedy. Just as behind Figaro one can feel the muttering of the French Revolution, so in the comedy of Shaw and Barker there is the pressure of our greater tragedy. And so John Tanner and the Voyseys join with us in our envy of the happy comedy of Sheridan in which good nature is blent with wit. It is written so easily, this play of a world that contained no grimmer spectre than a dun, a world unvexed with social and moral problems. Compared with the Teazles and the Surfaces the question is forced out. Were Tanner and the Voyseys ever more than ghosts? Did they body forth any more than the anxiety and uneasiness of their time? The plays in which they lived were without structure or form because there was no security in the minds of their creators, but rather a dreadful foreboding that the society which sustained them was on the verge of a collapse. Few plays have a more devastating end than "Man and Superman," with its "Go on talking"—talking because action was impossible.

Fortunate Sheridan then to live in a time when action was easy, and nothing very terrible could befall the characters, either physically or in the soul. Observe how neatly the plot is laid out to forestall any possibility of disaster and how charmingly wit and good feeling find their way through the intrigue. There is here no groping for the springs of character; a gentleman is a gentleman, a money-lender a money-lender, a hypocrite a hypocrite, and slipping into their places, the characters in the comedy can, in witty talk and graceful gesture, be themselves without explanation or analysis. The atmosphere of breeding forbids that any person should for a moment be out of his or her place. How happy could the ghosts of the Court be in such a world, an ordered society in which there were leisure and room for wit, raillery, and even scandal, perfectly cold and indifferent like the shadow cast by a wintry scene. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that in the playhouse of so many hopes, good comedy should be produced, if only to show us the world that we have left behind at its good-humored best, and it is fortunate that the playhouse should have fallen into the hands of a manager of so modest a quality. Mr. Fagan is content to let Sheridan speak for himself, takes pains to create the right atmosphere, and by care for *ensemble*, gives the actors the rare charm of healthily exercising their talents in co-operation. His audience is allowed to see the play, and defects of acting become details which are easily overlooked, whereas if the actors are allowed to thrust themselves between the audience and the play, success or failure depend entirely upon their performance. Here there are no actors of extraordinary merit, but all are good enough to carry even such a mistake in casting as that made in the lady who plays Lady Teazle.

The character is that of a young, high-spirited, quick, and witty girl, whose girlishness is all her charm for Sir Peter, who is character enough to deal with a mere woman. Her youth should be irresistible, and her youth was lacking. Serious though the mistake is, yet Mr. Fagan, working on sound lines, producing the play for the play's own sake, achieves a whole story enough to bear this flaw. As a producer he has built the play up scene by scene, scaling it down to the small stage, and

getting a design of exquisite small effects. In this he has good material to work with in such comedians as Mr. Arthur Whitley, Mr. Leon Quartermaine, and Miss Suzanne Sheldon, who, released by good production from individual anxiety, are able to get into their work a liveliness of character that, for the moment, is not to be found elsewhere in the London theatre.

GILBERT CANNAN.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE STARVATION OF AUSTRIA.

SIR,—May I be allowed to add to Mr. Brailsford's letter on the appalling conditions in Austria to-day? I was one of the few British prisoners in Austria, and, being able to speak German, I could both see and understand. I think that it was at the beginning of August that the "Arbeiter Zeitung" first openly published (and what is more, was allowed to publish) that it was quite impossible for the country to carry on the war over another winter.

Our camp was at Salzerbad—eight miles from the nearest railway station, Hainfeld—on the Eastern fringe of the Austrian Alps. Conditions were, of course, not so bad as in a town, but they were bad enough to make one feel the filth of all war. I, myself, lived solely on Austrian rations for eighteen days before reaching Salzerbad. It is an experience which I would not care to repeat, nor do I think that I could have endured it for any length of time.

I gained my knowledge when out on parole, and perhaps I may be allowed to re-state the articles mentioned in Mr. Brailsford's postscript and add a note as to the possibility of procuring them round Salzerbad—i.e., in an agricultural district. When I refer to a ration, I mean the civilian ration as well as our own.

Flour.—Potato flour could be bought in the one shop in the village for 18 kronen. It could be used for puddings, but nearly everyone was ill after it, and it was mainly used for thickening purposes.

Sugar.—We received our monthly ration of  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilo. It usually had to last six weeks. Saccharin was cheaper than in England, and was often procurable in limited quantities.

Butter.—Never less than 60 kronen a kilo, and usually 80 kronen. The ration of 1 oz. a week was at a government price of about 29 kronen.

Beef.—We never saw any—horse-flesh was eaten and enjoyed.

Sausage.—The only occasion on which this was sold was at 48 kronen. It was recommended as "extra fine." I did not have any myself.

Bread.—The ration became quite good in October— $\frac{1}{2}$  kilo a day. In one prison camp—Spatzern—it was 1.32 kilo a day in July, 1918.

Potatoes.—We very rarely got our ration of these. We could buy them outside the camp for 4-6 kronen.

Milk.—A ration of about 1-16 pint daily. A sick man (we had one permanent invalid in our camp) received a litre a day, after waiting three months for it. This was supposed to be his sole article of diet.

Eggs.—We never got these for less than 2 kronen each—bought outside the camp, of course. They were usually quite unprocurable. A peasant gave me five one day when I told her it was for a sick officer in the camp. I gave her five biscuits the following week.

Cheese.—Limburg could be bought for 25 kronen.

Men's Clothing and Women's Clothing.—These could not, of course, be bought round Salzerbad, but one could have obtained almost any article of food in exchange for clothing.

Boots and Thread.—When we left the camp an officer who was having a pair of field boots made from English leather sold the leather and thread to the bootmaker for 250 kronen.

Coal.—We never saw this, but wood in our district was unlimited and cheap. We had fires all day, and even in the bathroom!

Soap.—I saw a cheap soap substitute which ate into the skin, but the working man used water only.

The continued blockade is the more piteous in view of the courteous treatment the Austrians accorded their British prisoners. As they expressed it several times to me: "You treat your prisoners well—why shouldn't we treat you well?"—Yours, &c.,

1917 Club.

EX-INFANTRY OFFICER.

### IS PARLIAMENT DEAD?

SIR,—Some friends of mine tell me that Parliament, as an effective and constitutional instrument of democracy in this country, is dead. Even Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in his letter to you of last week, said that "... Parliaments have become cheapened. . . "and implied that they were one of the causes of Bolshevism. Now I have a proposal to make which should be a test of this. The Members of the House of Commons are, or may be considered, the voice of the people, and by both constitutional practice and history are there to guide and protect their interests. They are also representing the people in that House

to obtain and criticise the truth of all situations, national and international, affecting their well-being. Peace with the Central Powers of Europe is like to be signed early in April; but perhaps the people of this country do not realise that *we shall still be at war with half of Europe*, and without any apparent hope of peace. What is the truth about Russia and about Bolshevism? On the one hand we have extraordinary reports of rape, massacre and famine daily filling columns in a large section of the Press, and further reports that the Russian Bolsheviks are spending large sums of money in this country to attempt to overthrow the powers and authority of the State; and, on the other hand, we have the British Bolsheviks saying that all these reports are "invented in the newspaper offices." What is the truth about Bolshevism? Is it organised crime, or, are these reports a "Capitalist and Foreign Office conspiracy?" Why cannot we have the plain unvarnished facts? The people of this country would welcome the truth with open arms: is there a Bolshevik "danger" or not? It is the duty of Parliament to supply the truth. Why cannot a few progressive members press the Government for a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into Bolshevism? Such a Committee has the power to sift foreign evidence and to call any witnesses that it desires: it could get the truth and the facts and they would go before the people with the stamp of Parliament upon them. *Is Parliament dead?—or, does it fear the truth?—Yours, &c.,*

RICHMOND TEMPLE.

London, W. 1. March 17th, 1919.

### IRELAND—A SOLUTION?

SIR,—When President Wilson was in London he informed a journalist that the way the Americans managed their Irish was by using them as their Police!

Is not that the obvious solution of many of the questions before the Paris Conference? Use Ireland and the Irish for the purposes for which they are peculiarly fitted.

You want an abiding place for the League of Nations? Why not Ireland? She would be tolerably central for all the Nations, yet isolated. Neutral, with no international axe to grind. Very hospitable, and having an agreeable climate even if the weather is somewhat vexatious.

You want a Police under the League? Where in the world can you get better police than the Irish? Shrewd, sympathetic, and best of all, elastic. Each man a Court of Justice in himself and incorruptible at that! Soldiers of Fortune for centuries. Administrators without compare.

One-third of the American Navy is Irish; join them up with their countrymen in the English Navy and you have a pretty good nucleus to work on.

You want a chief to command them?

Have you heard of an Admiral named Beatty, from Wexford? He might do to go on with. French and Bryan-Mahon might lend a hand if required. Queenstown would do for a police-station, commanding the trade routes of Europe.

If you want to administer backward native states for the benefit of the inhabitants, Ireland teams with men to suit your requirements; unprejudiced and capable.

And look at the effect on Ireland! Glowing with consciousness of the honor done to her, the confidence placed in her, and the recognition at last of her true position in the world, she would accept the trust and forget the past in the vision of the future.

With the change in spirit and unity of object her difficulties would disappear, distrust and fear would vanish.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES H. WEBB.

"Tinoran," Glenageary, Co. Dublin.

March 11th, 1919.

## Poetry.

### A SONG FOR THE 'SEVENTIES.

"The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children."

LITTLE ones, to you we leave  
All the sins we here confess,  
Yours to censure or relieve  
What we do in thoughtlessness.

Think of us as children, too,  
Building castles on the sands,  
Splendid things we mean to do  
Yet—we somehow soil our hands.

So that when we elders hear  
Your loud knocking at our doors,  
Pardon us if we appear  
Decked in dirty pinafores.

JAMES DALE.



## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Peace Conference Hints." By Bernard Shaw. (Constable. 1s. 6d. net.)
- "The Betrothal." A Fairy Play in Five Acts. Being a Sequel to the "Blue Bird." By Maurice Maeterlinck. Translated by A. Teixeira de Mattos. (Methuen. 6s. net.)
- "The British Campaigns in France and Flanders, 1917." By Arthur Conan Doyle. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d. net.)
- "✓ Sylvia and Michael." The Further Adventures of Sylvia Scarlett. A Novel. By Compton Mackenzie. (Martin Secker. 8s. net.)

WHEN Miss M. P. Willcocks—"Looking towards New Horizons" (John Lane)—explains what she sees, or what she thinks she sees, in those regions beyond where we shall not arrive till another dawn or two, she does it in so pleasant a manner that it is possible to read her book on the commonwealth with enjoyment; a great admission to make about a book of essays which some might associate with the hideous word Reconstruction, a category of letters not recognized on this page.

For everybody seems to know how to reconstruct. It appears to be as easy as was conscripting men for the purpose of destruction. It is one of the wonders of human intelligence that its own accommodating ratiocination never affords it any amusement. Though, maybe, fear of the wrath to come is partly responsible for the present clamor of economists and sociologists in the publishers' announcements, almost drowning there the rushing noise of the cataract of new novels. But, as a famous controversialist once warned them, "they had better save their breath to cool their porridge—if they get any." It is too late now. The wrath is coming all right. You many wish you had not done it after fooling carelessly with the magic which imprisoned the Djinn; but once he is out you are merely at liberty to be surprised and sorry. Pandora's box is open, and it is no good for the clever reconstructionists to stand around with little screw-drivers, chatting eagerly about locks and hinges.

YET, as Miss Willcocks seems to know, those people whose intensity of concentration in putting the world right after they have helped to wreck it amounts to a painfully anxious squint, might have discovered long ago what the consequences of a prolonged war by the modern community would be, had they but taken the trouble to look into the mind of the working folk on whom the community is based. They never knew. They thought nothing was there. Every industrial revolt, every political revolution (the last great dock strikes, for example, and the political revolution of 1906) takes the Press by surprise. The Press never gets any "news" until after the event. And the governing class has not yet learned to look elsewhere than in the Press for its information about the folk, and so is invariably engaged in accommodating itself to forces about which it knows nothing but the romantic till it is too late. Miss Willcocks is an optimist, of course, because she really can make good guesses at latent and deeply-seated tendencies, and so she is indifferent about the malign influences at Whitehall, in Paris, and in Rome. She knows quite well that in time all that is now being done by astute statemongers who are unaware they have been dead five years will vanish like dry sticks in a dam burst. Her smile, therefore, is calm and bright.

It is a curious thing, and worth considering, but the political busybodies never take any notice of what is said by a trained observer, thinker, and artist like Miss Willcocks. For that matter, though no doubt they read with enjoyment what novelists and dramatists like Shaw, Wells, and Bennett have to say about peace and war, they always dismiss them with the kind toleration which a business man who has no time for anything but his own affairs invariably shows towards the artist who has time for the world's affairs. It has never entered his head that the artist could beat him at his own game, having the better mind, and leave him with nothing but a match-tray on Ludgate Hill, if such little

tricks were worth while. The average practical man of affairs is saved because it is not worth while to do it to him. The artist has a better task for his short life than that. But—it cannot be proved, of course—but it is perfectly safe to say that Wells is doing much more to form the world's thought, and to shape the future, than all the political host of anti-like intriguers now shifting subterranean mould from place to place beneath Westminster. Why the Press concentrates so much on those activities, looking for "news" mainly there and in the police-courts, is a mystery; or, perhaps, merely an old bad habit?

In a chapter on Literature and Democracy Miss Willcocks, discussing "new values" and their "new expressions" which will be understood by the common people (it is usually forgotten that we have been authoritatively instructed to speak in the *vulgar* tongue, a command artists obey only in private, as a rule), reports a group of peasants she saw staring dully at the picture at Amiens by Puvis de Chavannes, "Ludus Pro Patria." "The difficulty between Puvis de Chavannes and the peasants was caused by the painter's appeal to tradition. What echoes in the mind of a cultivated man would not be aroused by the grouping and sentiment of these dream-like figures? Here is suggested to the imagination with a background, the loveliness of Sicilian pastoral literature, of Virgilian Georgics, of the Homeric plough, and the bees of Hymettus, all seen through the medium of great minds. The light . . . is not the same that scorches the harvester, the vine-tender, or the tobacco-gatherer in the fields of France: it is the sunlight of a faery world that age after age has been growing richer and more beautiful from the inspiration of generations, till it trails clouds of suggestion that live only in the mind of the spectator. But to those shut out from the past it is naturally strange and even grotesque."

SHE thinks this dependence on tradition has made literature the last of the arts to reach the mass of the people. She does not think Dickens can be rightly enjoyed without a knowledge of Victorian London; or Meredith, without a certain freedom in allusive and joyous conversation; or Hardy, without the chill of the shadow of finality has fallen across one's own landscape from the figure of Schopenhauer. But this makes access to the people appear more difficult than it really is. Lord Cavan (one of our most popular army commanders, for very sound reasons) reported recently that a revue, organized for the amusement of our troops in Italy, failed to amuse them. Quite as one might have expected (the unreal war being over), the revue bored them. A clever actor on the Staff, not without a little dubiety, volunteered to read to the men some "Macbeth." He did read it, for two hours, and by acclamation was forced to give more of it afterwards. Those men did not want any background of Scottish history to enable them to enjoy Shakespeare. Nor do the Lancashire mill girls require the sense of imminent doom, which Schopenhauer may have got from the Greeks, to enjoy Hardy—a favorite novelist with them, I am told. I do not believe it is chiefly the working class, being without the sense of the great tradition in its reading, which is the main support of the comic penny illustrated papers and the multitude of popular novels which always bear the face of a "flapper" on their wrappers. It is the middle class which supplies most of the dupes to the charlatans, literary and political. And the reason may be that the middle class is farther removed from the springs of life than are carpenters, miners, mill girls, sailors, shipwrights, and such. These people are creators; in a real sense, they are forced to be artists. They must take the crude stuff of life and shape it, or perish. That is the great tradition. They have no need to get it from books. Consequently when Tolstoy is presented to them, or Shakespeare, or Dickens, or Sterne, or Hardy, they are moved by the comedy and tragedy of themselves. They want no interpreter then. It is true they never read "A Poor Man's House," or books of that sort; written, of course, to intrigue the curiosity of the middle class. But they recognize instantly the real thing when they see it. It is the modern artists who are at fault, because for the most part they write their books, paint their pictures, and compose their music and dramas for the public which has the money to pay. Why should a miner pay 6s. to learn about real life from Mrs. Humphry Ward?

H. M. T.

## Reviews.

### THINGS SEEN.

"Old Junk." By H. M. TOMLINSON. (Melrose. 4s. 6d. net.)

MR. TOMLINSON is a born traveller. There are two sorts of travellers—those who do what they are told and those who do what they please. Mr. Tomlinson has never moved about the world in obedience to a guide-book. He would find it almost as difficult to read a guide-book as to write one. He never echoes other men's curiosity. He travels for the purpose neither of information nor of conversation. He has no motive but whim. His imagination goes roaming; and, his imagination and his temper being such as they are, he is out on his travels even if he gets no further than Limehouse or the Devonshire coast. He has, indeed, wandered a good deal further than Limehouse and Devonshire, as readers of "The Sea and the Jungle" know. Even in the present volume of sketches, essays, confessions, short stories—how is one to describe them?—he takes us with him to the north coast of Africa, to New York, and to France in war time. But the English chapters in the book—the description of the crowd at a pit-month after an explosion in a coal-mine, the account of a derelict railway station and a grocer's boy in spectacles—almost equally give us the feeling that we are reading the narrative of one who has seen nothing except with the fortunate eyes of a stranger. It is all a matter of eyes. To see is to discover, and Mr. Tomlinson's whole book is in this sense a book of discoveries.

As a recorder of the things he has seen he has the three great gifts of imagery, style, and humor. He sees the jelly-fish hanging in the transparent deeps "like sunken moons." A boat sailing on a windy day goes skimming over the inflowing ridges of the waves "with exhilarating undulations, light as a sandpiper." A queer Lascar on a creeping errand in an East-end street, "looked as uncertain as a candle-flame in a draught." How well again Mr. Tomlinson conveys to us in a sentence or two the vision of Northern Africa on a wet day:

"As for Bougie, these African villages are built but for sunlight. They change to miserable and filthy ruins in the rain, their white walls blotched and scabrous, and their paths mud tracks between the styces. Their lissome and statuesque inhabitants become softened and bent, and pad dejectedly through the muck as though they were ashamed to live, but had to go on with it. The palms which look so well in sunny pictures are besoms up ended in a drizzle."

Mr. Tomlinson has in that last sentence captured the ultimate secret of a wet day in an African village. Even those of us who have never seen Africa save on the map, know that often there is nothing more to be said. Mr. Tomlinson, however, is something of a specialist in bad weather, and indeed any man who loves the sea as he does must be. The weather fills the world for the seaman with gods and demons. The weather is at once the day's adventure and the day's pageant. Mr. Conrad has written one of the greatest stories in the world simply about weather and the soul of man. He may be said to be the first novelist writing in English to have kept his weather-eye open. Mr. Tomlinson shares Mr. Conrad's sensitive care not only for Nature's face but for Nature's struggles. His description of a storm of rain bursting on the African hills makes you see the thing as you read. In its setting, even an unadorned and simple sentence like:

"As Yeo luffed, the squall fell on us bodily with a great weight of wind and white rain, pressing us into the sea," compels our presence among blowing winds and dangerous waters.

But, weather-beaten as Mr. Tomlinson's pages are, there is more in them than the weather. There is an essayish quality in his book, personal, confessional, go-as-you-please. The majority of essays have egotism without personality. Mr. Tomlinson's sketches have personality without egotism. He is economical of discussion of his own tastes. When he does discuss them you know that here is no make-believe of confession. Take, for instance, the comment on place-names with which he prefaces his account of his disappointment with Tripoli:

"You probably know there are place-names, which, when whispered privately, have the unreasonable power of translating the spirit east of the sun and west of the moon. They cannot be seen in print without a thrill. The names in the atlas which do that for me are a motley lot, and you, who see no magic in them, but have your own lunacy in

another phase, would laugh at mine. Celebes, Acapulco, Para, Port Royal, Cartagena, the Marquesas, Panama, the Mackenzie River, Tripoli of Barbary—they are some of mine. Rome should be there, I know, and Athens, and Byzantium. But they are not, and that is all I can say about it."

That is the farthest Mr. Tomlinson ever gets in the way towards arrogance. He ignores Rome and Athens. They are not among the ports of call of his imagination. He prefers the world that sailors tell about to the world that scholars talk about. He will not write about—he will scarcely even interest himself in—any world but that which he has known in the intimacy of his imaginative or physical experience. Places that he has seen and thought of, ships, children, stars, books, animals, soldiers, workers—of all these things he will tell you with a tender realism, lucid and human because they are part of his life. But the tradition that is not his own he throws aside as a burden. He will carry no pack save of the things that have touched his heart and his imagination.

We wish all his sketches had been as long as "The African Coast." It is so good that one wishes to send him travelling from star to star of all those names that mean more to him than Byzantium. One desires even to keep him a prisoner for a longer period among the lights of New York. He should have written about the blazing city at length; and he has written about the ferries. His description of the lighted ferries and the woman passenger who had forgotten Jimmy's boots remains in the memory like Rupert Brooke's description of the New York sky-signs. Always in his sketches we find some such significant "thing seen." On the voyage home from New York on a floating hotel it is the passing of a derelict sailing ship, "mastless and awash," that suddenly recreates for him the reality of the ocean. After describing the assaults of the seas on the doomed hulk, he goes on:

"There was something ironic in the indifference of her defenceless body to these unending attacks. It mocked this white and raging post-mortem brutality, and gave her a dignity that was cold and superior to all the eternal powers could now do. She pitched helplessly head first into a hollow, and a door flew open under the break of her poop; it surprised and shocked us, for the dead might have signed to us then. She went astern of us fast, and a great comber ran at her, as if it had just spied her, and thought she was escaping. There was a high white flash, and a concussion we heard. She had gone. But she appeared again for away, forlorn on a summit in desolation, black against the sunset. The stump of her bowsprit, the accusatory finger of the dead, pointed at the sky."

We find in "The Ruins" (which is a sketch of a town in France just evacuated by the Germans), an equally imaginative use made of a key incident. First, we have the description of the ruined town itself:

"House-fronts had collapsed in rubble across the road. There is a smell of opened vaults. All the homes are blind. Their eyes have been put out. Many of the buildings are without roofs, and their walls have come down to raw serrations. Slates and tiles have avalanched into the street, or the roof itself is entire, but has dropped sideways over the ruin below as a drunken cap over the dissolute."

And so on till we come to the discovery of a corn-chandler's ledger lying in the mud of the roadway. Only an artist could have made a tradesman's ledger a symbol of hope and resurrection on a shattered planet as Mr. Tomlinson has done. He picks out from the disordered procession of things treasures that most of us would pass with hardly a glance. His clues to the meaning of the world are all of his own finding. It is this that gives his work the savour and freshness of literature.

As for clues to Mr. Tomlinson's own mind and temper, do we not discover plenty of them in his confessions about books? He is a man who likes to read "The Voyage to the Honyhnhms" in bed. Heine and Samuel Butler and Anatole France are among his favorite authors. There is nothing in his work to suggest that he has taken any of them for his models. But there is a vein of rebellious irony in his writing that makes one realize why his imagination finds in Swift good company. He, too, has felt his heart lacerated, especially in these late days of the world's corruption. His writing would be bitter, one feels, were it not for the strength of his affections. Humanity and irony contend in his work, and humanity is fortunately the winner. In the result, the world in his book is not permanently a mud-ball, but a star shining in space. Perhaps it is in gratitude for this that we find it possible at last even to forgive him his contemptuous references to Coleridge's "Table-talk"—that book of jewels all but buried in cotton-wool.

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## M. LOISY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

**"La Paix des Nations et la Religion de l'Avenir."**  
Leçon d'Overture du Cours d'Histoire des Religions au Collège de France; prononcée le 2 décembre, 1918. Par ALFRED LOISY. (Paris: Emile Nourry, Editeur.)

"On voit bien, mon ami, que ces hommes-là ne font pas oraison," said a venerable Sulpician of the politicians who brought about the dynastic revolution of 1830. Renan, who, writing fifty years later, records the saying, adds: "Le mot m'est dernièrement revenu à l'esprit, à propos de certains discours. Que de choses expliquées par ce fait que probablement M. Clemenceau ne fait pas oraison!" This distinguished man has, it seems, seen the error of his ways. We have his own authority for the statement that his nightly ejaculation is, "Georges Clemenceau, tu crois en la Ligue des Nations!" and that on rising he makes a daily act of faith in his new creed.

This change of orientation is, we are afraid, somewhat ironical on the part of M. Clemenceau. But it is not personal only. Till within the last few weeks the proposed League of Nations left even intellectual France cold. Nationalist France was frankly and bitterly hostile. Can this surprise us? Were Gounod living he might give us a new and more piercing "Gallia"; the climax of the long agony which began in 1870 came in 1914 with "the blast of the terrible ones." *In terris pressura gentium*. France went through a furnace heated sevenfold, and the smell of the flame passed upon her; she was "saved, yet so as by fire." Had Englishmen or Americans seen their territory violated, and experienced the atrocities of the German occupation, they would have been as determined as Frenchmen that at all costs a repetition of those horrors must be rendered impossible. Germany seemed crushed. But was she? There are resurrections. "J'ai peur qu'elle grandisse," said a French statesman.

One of the pioneers of the French movement in favor of the League of Nations was the distinguished exegete M. Alfred Loisy, who, after receiving the honor of excommunication at the hands of Pius X., succeeded M. Albert Réville in the Chair of History of Religions at the Collège de France. His "Leçon d'ouverture," of December 2nd, 1918, was, perhaps, as courageous an act as the publication of "Les Evangiles Synoptiques," and of his "Simplex Reflexions," in 1908.

"Non civium ardor prava jubentium,  
Non vultus instantis tyranni."

The two forms of courage do not always coincide. It was a successful piece of pioneer work; French public opinion is at once generous and intelligent. And it is one of the ironies of history that "La Paix des Nations et la Religion de l'Avenir" should have come from a man whom the greatest of the Christian churches pronounced unworthy of Christian communion. "The last shall be first."

He describes it as "une petite apocalypse." The thought with which the dramatic end of the war inspires him is that of the prophet: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground." The same cry broke from the greatest of Christian mystics when he saw in vision the overthrow of the Babylon of his age. With the fall of Germany, as of Babylon and of Rome, one chapter of history closes, and another opens: the old gods depart, the new arrive. The idea of a universal order is not new. The Pax Romana realized it for the Mediterranean peoples; and, when Christianity took the place of the Pax Romana, the Catholic Church perpetuated the Empire and extended its borders, admitting its barbarian conquerors to the civil and religious citizenship of the Roman world. But the framework, solid as it was, proved inadequate to the content. Cæsarism, indeed, dies hard; the spectral figures of the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern absolutisms haunted the world till yesterday; the Papacy, if enfeebled, survives to-day.

"Le nouvel Evangile a été annoncé, comme il convenait, par le chef d'un peuple libre; le président des Etats-Unis a parlé en médiateur de la nouvelle alliance et en pape de l'humanité."

The World-Peace which M. Loisy has in view is not a political armistice containing in itself the seeds of new conflicts; it is the outcome of a law written on the heart. It is essentially religious, because it embodies definite mystical

and moral forces, and is based on justice. Plato has shown us the implication of this universal virtue. They are far-reaching; and their realization may seem distant. But the impossible of to-day is the possible of to-morrow; it was a saying of Turgot that people who are now reckoned worthless would have been thought very Capuchins a hundred years ago. The phrase, the religion of humanity, is open to misconception. But the moral advance of the race is brought about *non sine numine*; and is concerned not only with material goods, but with goods of a higher order—with the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind. That the historical religions will play a part in this human progress is certain; the discredit which its self-seeking policy during the war reflects on the Papacy may have important and unforeseen results.

"Il n'est pas impossible, il est vraisemblable, et il est très souhaitable que de la présente crise de l'humanité résulte, de manière ou d'autre, cet élargissement du christianisme catholique dont avaient rêvé ceux que l'anathème pontifical a qualifiés de modernistes, et que notre vieille religion, ou du moins la majeure partie de ses adeptes, s'orientent franchement dans le sens de la religion nouvelle. Rien ne serait plus avantageux pour notre pays, rien ne serait plus heureux pour la cause du progrès humain."

For, like slavery, and sacrifice, and pauperism, war belongs to a stage through which the race passes, but from which it emerges, and to which it will not return. To those who are on this stage, these incidents appear inevitable, and their attendant miseries part and parcel of what we take to be the natural limitation of human things. It is not till we have got beyond them that we see their real nature. They are not inevitable; and had it not been for our own folly we should have long ago emerged from them. No one now supposes that slavery is the foundation of the social order; or that sacrifice is pleasing to God; or thinks of pauperism, or famine, or disease, or crime, in any other light than that of largely preventable evils. They decline as civilization advances; to a great extent they can be, and, we believe, will be, overcome. Does not war fall under the same head? It has come down to us from the herd-period, as a rough and ready means of settling differences for the time being; the appeal is to physical force, which is a variable quantity; at the first opportunity the struggle is renewed.

We have been nobly reminded that "there is a great wind of moral force moving through the world; and that every man who opposes himself to this wind will go down in disgrace." Great words of a great man! For the City of Peace will not come down ready made from heaven! the work of its construction imposes itself on men of goodwill.

"Ce qui maintenant importe n'est pas de célébrer en discours la chute des Babylones, mais d'empêcher leur résurrection toujours possible, en travaillant avec courage et persévérance à l'édification de Jérusalem."

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The Russian chapters are far better than the rest, for Miss Doty in Petrograd was too busy keeping indifferently warm and well to allow her much desire for generalization.

"The hotels were bourgeois and capitalistic. They received scant help from the working class government. There was no heat in my room, and only one electric light. The food grew poorer day by day. Attempts to remedy defects by fees were useless. The waiter pushed back my tip proudly, and said, 'We don't take tips now.' A sign in one restaurant read: 'Don't think you can insult a man because he is a waiter by giving him a tip.'"

These details succeed in suggesting a world turned upside down, in which "there was plenty of tea, a fair amount of black bread, quantities of vegetables, cabbages, beets, carrots, turnips, potatoes, and coarse meat. There was never any sweets or pastry, but sometimes we had butter, and usually four lumps of sugar a day. It was a case of survive if you can and if you do you'll grow strong."

Other indications of the new order could be gathered from the streets:—

"I walked from my house towards the Winter Palace. When I came within two squares I saw bright red drops on the snow. At first I thought it was wine, but it was too red and thick for that, and there were splotches of red on some of the buildings where a wounded man had been leaning. All over the road and on the frozen Neva were smashed bottles. I picked up a bottle. Its label was the Czar's coat of arms. It was a choice brand of Madeira."

Miss Doty is strikingly impartial in her estimation of the Russian character as displayed by the common soldiers or the aristocrats whom she encountered. "The soldiers," in the fortress of Peter and Paul, "were looking at me curiously. I was an American, and they wanted to know about America."

"Why has America gone to the war?"

"Has President Wilson sold out to the capitalists?"

"Will there be a revolution in America?"

She gave them a brief summary of the advantages of federalized democracy.

"One man, an illiterate, was not to be convinced. There was only one remedy for inequalities. The working class must rise, whether they were a minority or a majority. The capitalists must be beheaded. He, himself, would like to behead them one by one. In the flickering light I seemed to see him pull out his knife and feel the edge of it. But the other men were against such methods. They suppressed this firebrand. Their intelligence was marvellous. Many had never been to school, yet they knew about conditions in America and Europe. Their conversation was not confined to wages and food, but dealt with world politics."

In the packed court-room of the Revolutionary Tribunal, whose procedure Miss Doty attended as a qualified lawyer,

"One family, a mother and several daughters, and some relatives, appeared in all their finery. They wore rings and diamond brooches, and displayed expensive furs. They crowded on the bench beside me. There was not room for them all, so one of the daughters turned to me. She spoke in German (the language of the Russian Court): 'Will you move to the back of the room. We want this bench. One of the prisoners is a relative.'"

"I had been in Court four hours. I had sat in my seat the whole time, to hold it. I looked up at the young woman and shook my head. She reddened with anger. Her insolence was intolerable. She seemed to have forgotten that there had been a revolution. She planted herself half on me and half on the bench. She was very beautiful, but her body was as hard and rigid as her face. I found my temper mounting. I understood the rage of the Bolsheviks at the insolence of the aristocracy. I drove my elbow with a vicious dig into the young woman."

Finally, from Miss Doty's account of a debate in the Soviet, we may take her impressions of Trotsky and Lenin:—

"It was Trotsky who spoke first. He is a man of medium size with a large well-shaped head. His hair is thick; his forehead high, his eye bright and keen. His chin is small and weak, but this is hidden by a moustache and short beard. He stoops slightly. He is simple and direct in manner, and without affectation. He speaks with passion and plays upon his audience's emotion."

Lenin is a small man. Not at all radical in appearance. The front of his head is quite bald. His face is clean shaven except for a small moustache. His manner is simple. He started in like a college professor reading a lecture. He didn't pound or rant. But in a few minutes the crowd was still. His words burnt in."

Posterity may be as much interested as Mrs. Bullitt hopes in her uncensored diary, which is a collection of brief notes by the wife of an American official. The Bullitts were cordially received and saw much of card indices and social organization for war purposes. In June, 1916, Mrs. Bullitt

commits to paper the aphorism that "if one knew whether Germany knew beforehand of the Austrian Note to Serbia one would know better just how deliberately Germany went into this." On September the 28th she is able to record, from the safe distance of Copenhagen, that

"Billy has learned from the German Foreign Office itself that German officials received the Austro-Hungarian note to Serbia fourteen hours before it was presented in Belgrade. This fact has been persistently denied by every German, official or unofficial, we have met. The Foreign Office says it did not have time to decide what it must do to avert the consequences the note obviously would produce."

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"I think," says he, "that we shouldn't stay here among all this crowd. It is unwise to do so. Let us go straight to the Royal Square, or go home again." The words are hardly out of his mouth when a mighty explosion raises the echoes. Nobody takes any notice. We are abreast of Saint-Jacques Church when a second explosion occurs. That makes people turn round and ponder. 'There, they are celebrating their entry by blank fire.' But the haughty Prussian officers, who keep on passing, begin to frown and look astonished. We reach the Theatre. A third explosion! This time loud cries are heard. Looking behind us, we see the lower end of the Rue de Vesle filled with dust and smoke; the sunshine is dimmed by it. Everybody begins to run. From all sides people shout at us: 'They are bombarding us; take cover; get back home!'"

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China's tragedy Dr. Morse is inclined to attribute, over-much perhaps, to the incompetence of her Manchu rulers. The ultimate cause lies deeper than in the incompetence of a dynasty or régime. It is the calamitous outcome of an inevitable collision between two utterly disparate civilizations, in which the weaker, though not necessarily the



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BY

H. G. WELLS.

Mr. H. G. Wells's numerous readers will be pleased to learn that he has written a new short novel entitled

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inferior, civilization had to go to the wall. Briefly, the story is one of sheer exploitation, gathering impetus as the improvement of sea communications has shortened China's distance from the forceful and energetic Western peoples. The impact began three-quarters of a century ago in the successive and successful attempts to force an entry for Western commerce. This culminated in the treaties of the 'fifties and 'sixties. Then the process quickened until it seemed in the scramble of the late 'nineties that the breakup of China had definitely begun. A sense of the dangers of partition was aroused among the Powers by the Russo-Japanese War, and during the present century exploitation has been not less naked or less intense, but to some extent inhibited by mutual fear among the exploiting Powers.

There is not sufficient space to describe in detail how far China's subjection has already gone. Suffice it to say that it has gone so far that one wonders how it will eventually be reconciled with China's new status as a constituent member of the League of Nations. It is, indeed, difficult to exaggerate the significance of China's admission into the League. It may well—it certainly ought to—open a new and better chapter in the story of China's international relations. At all events, when, or rather if, the affairs of Europe are settled, China will prove the "acid test" for the League. It is surely within the limits of legitimate prophesy to say that in default of an effectual World League China would be the seed-bed of the next world-war. A country of vast and almost untouched wealth; with a highly-civilized population, literate, industrious, skilful, almost as great in numbers as that of all Europe; and with coal and mineral resources comparable only with those of the United States, and situated in the midst of an incomparable labor force; such a country means too much in this capitalistic and militarist age to be safely ignored. China is a prize too big for any one of the Great Powers to allow another to acquire there any control or special privilege; too tempting for them to arrange a satisfactory *modus vivendi* among themselves, save through the erection of an international machine of world scope and supernatural power. It remains to be seen whether the League will prove to be that machine.

#### REFLECTIONS FROM THE WAR.

"The Prisoners of Mainz." By ALEC WAUGH. (Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d. net.)

"The Last Ditch." By VIOLET HUNT. (Stanley Paul. 7s. net.)

"The Devil's Problem." By MARGARET WESTRUP. (Hurst & Blackett. 6s. net.)

MR. WAUGH's new book is not a novel at all, but a series of pictures of his life as a prisoner in Germany told with fidelity, humor, shrewdness, and ease. Serious people may be inclined to think that the treatment is too light for the material, and that a young man who has won his literary spurs so convincingly should have put his record together upon a broader, deeper, more penetrating philosophy. But Mr. Waugh is yet in his twenties, and his rather naive references here to his own books and ambitions should not prejudice any but a solemn reader against him. Nor is the general conduct of the book at all as light as it looks, and a rapier is not necessarily blunted at the tip because it is gaily adorned at the hilt. And the book will be highly serviceable to that happily growing class of reader which is anxious to get its facts first-hand and not through the distorting channels of nameless "special correspondents." When, for instance, Mr. Waugh declares that the real tribulation of his imprisonment was derived not from the brutalities of the Germans, but simply from the forced society of his fellow officers, at once a great truth is loosened and we breathe fresh air again. For that, we say as our imagination is given release, was exactly how it must have been. Hardship, sorrow, even iron bars we can endure, but to be compelled to live for nine months on end in the company of fellow-sufferers we have not naturally chosen to suffer with us—that is to put an edge upon hardship, confinement, and sorrow. Mr. Waugh, again, was no doubt fortunate in his experiences of the German attitude to England, for he was captured late in the war, he received no positive ill-treatment, and the most he had to put up

with was officialism. Barbarity, of course, there has been, and particularly among the privates, but propaganda, as Mr. Waugh says, aims not at the establishment of truth, but of an argument, and when we are assured upon the testimony of an honest and highly-intelligent witness of a picture that is not all black, let us welcome this bucket, however small, and fling it upon the furnace of hate.

So with starvation. "Prisoners," says Mr. Waugh, "were miserably unfed; but so was the entire German people." Indeed, as Mr. Waugh implies, the bad conditions of captivity were aggravated not by Teutonic malevolence, but by a public school education, which carefully preserves its charges from the intellectual interests of life and leaves them without resources in a non-routine crisis. The German Revolution he puts down suggestively to the reaction of the individual from "a collective abstraction with which he has not identified himself." Sooner or later, he wisely says, the collective emotion yields before the personal demand, and the individual asks himself, "Why am I doing this?" Unfortunately, the individual is not always moved to put this quintessential question to himself upon altruistic grounds, and, according to Mr. Waugh, the driving force was that "Germany was actually starving" many days before the armistice. Hatred against England had died before the absorbing weariness and misery of the war, and poems appeared in the newspapers not according to the gospel of Herr Lissauer, but of our own soldier poets—Messrs. Graves, Sassoon, Masfield, and many others. When the Armistice was signed and the prisoners were free to go about the town, the children used to besiege them like sparrows for scraps of food, and the general cry was:—

"You have beaten us. We cannot fight any more. Why must you continue the blockade? We have done everything you asked for; the Kaiser is gone; we have a new Government."

Deny these things as we will; impute Mr. Waugh's courageous verdicts to German intrigue or abjectness; keep our faces resolutely peering into the outer darkness of Germany's war record, both at home and abroad—yet these pros and cons have now become strangely irrelevant. For what has been done to Germany since the Armistice in the name of the Entente gives the doers thereof small right to moral judgments. At any rate, Mr. Waugh's candid book in which he speaks the truth regardless of prejudice and what it is expected of him to say, has an agreeable sparkle and flavor.

"The Last Ditch" might rashly be called a satire of the aristocracy. But it is almost too impersonal, too impartially analytic for that. It simply places these people minutely, scrupulously, and elaborately before us and leaves us, not to be moved by their tragedy, to pity their folly, to be revolted by their egoism and stupidity, but just to realize their gradual relapse during the years of the war into utter insignificance. Nor is there any pathos, any dignity whatever in this deadly process of fading, dissolving, and quite forgetting. We are left contemplating a void, from which every trace of color, every emotional stir, every broken surface and irregularity of line—all visibility and all atmosphere—have been carefully removed. We, too, as we read, seem drawn into the void, so that we feel neither regret for, nor indignation at, nor sympathy with this—what shall we call it?—vanished, or vanishing, species. They have failed to adapt themselves to their environment; they are victims of the law of the survival of the fittest. The book is in the form of correspondence from a Countess and her younger, futile, play-acting-with-life daughter Lady Venice Arles to their married daughter and sister in America. Like everything that Miss Hunt does, it is a relentless study of very considerable power and skill. But it suffers from the very exigencies of the material. Miss Hunt works not wisely but too well, for we get tired of this poor, impotent driftwood in the maelstrom of war before we are half-way through with it, and Miss Hunt is involved in the relaxation of interest. Yet these aristocrats have their points. They are not greedy, hypocritical, conscienceless, and Philistine, like the plutocracy which has long supplanted them (not the democracy, as Miss Hunt implies); they respond to their "feudal obligations," and their young male stock has been practically exterminated; they are not an offence in the sight of God like the politicians; they are even devoted, patient, and

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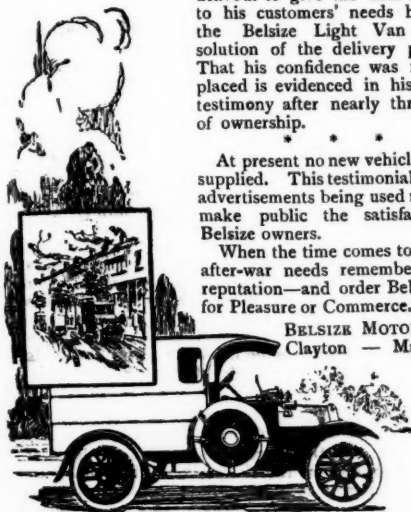
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self-sacrificing; they have a style. Yet they somehow fail to catch the eye or heart or mind like an indifferent, but not vulgar, design on the tiles of a fireplace, which we look at only because it is there.

There are novels which, full of talent, good feeling, sincerity, and ideas as they may be, yet seem to ask and receive only one verdict—they have simply failed to come off. That, we fear, applies to Miss Westrup's latest book, which reads not like the latest development of an experienced and distinguished novelist, but the first attempt of a novice who shows promise. There is both thought and quality in "The Devil's Problem," but it is not made, it is not composed, it has not found its due form. It never quite comes alive and sets out on its travels.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"America and Britain." By Prof. A. C. McLAUGHLIN. (Dent. 4s. 6d.)

THESE papers were originally given as lectures in England, Professor McLaughlin being one of the American historians invited to this country to explain the course of events which brought the United States into the war. His probings into the causes of wars do not strike very deep, but of value to students of international affairs is his examination of the Monroe Doctrine. He pleads for the adoption by Europe of the Monroe principle, but admits that the United States themselves are still perplexed in its application to the Western World. The temptation, for instance, to extend capitalistic interest in Mexico and Central America is very great, and he asks: "May we ourselves use any and all means, but must we lay the heavy hand of Monroe on a European government that would follow our example?" During Mr. Wilson's presidency, at any rate, the doctrine has been applied in the spirit of altruism, although critics have alleged that in refusing to recognize Huerta in Mexico Mr. Wilson did not live up to his code of international ethics. But Huerta was the creature of foreign capital, and his success in dictatorship would have encouraged other conscienceless usurpers. Mr. McLaughlin points out that if Mr. Wilson's refusal to recognise Huerta was interference, his patient waiting was the reverse. "Under savage verbal assault at home, and under sharp, relentless criticism, he refused to do more than watch and wait; . . . he must have seen that most of the acrimony in the United States would be made use of by capitalistic interests, and that if we made war on Mexico we shattered the whole fabric of the new, humane, peaceful, generous, hopeful Monroe Doctrine." Mr. McLaughlin thinks there have been few occasions in history disclosing more real bravery than Mr. Wilson's firmness amid the clamor of the war-mongers during that Mexican crisis. It was to show the quality again on a greater occasion. "I am proposing," he said, a few months before America declared war on Germany, "that the nations should, with one accord, adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world." It is no longer merely an objection to the extension of European authority in the Americas; it means to Mr. Wilson and to the author of these papers a principle of decent and humane relationship between all the nations of the world.

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"The Training of Youth." By T. W. BERRY, Director of Education, Rhondda. (Fisher Unwin. 7s.)

THIS treatise on the training of adolescents contains nothing that will appear new or revolutionary to those who have given thought to our slipshod educational system, but it is on sound lines, and should be forced into the notice of those who ought to be giving attention to the matter. Mr. Berry views the problem psychologically, and suggests methods of creating interest in study and recreation. Youthful interest cannot be captured until some system of education is adopted such as Mr. Berry suggests. He deals with many subjects in his survey—juvenile employment, which he insists must be abolished altogether, vocational training, and play centres. There is a long chapter on the subject of moral virility. Mr. Berry courageously tackles a dangerous and disputable question, pleading for instruction from right sources on sex. Self-knowledge being of utmost importance

in its bearing on the life of the individual and the community, our author demands that every school should provide instruction in the upper section in physiology. He suggests that the teacher should be an itinerant specialist qualified in biology and physiology. The facts which Mr. Berry produces, showing what results from a system in which such instruction is ignored—whether or not they be due to the lack of this instruction—are terrifying.

### The Week in the City.

THE City has been rather unhappy in consequence of the strike menace, and Consols are gradually declining towards 57. It is thought, however, that a very big strike of railwaymen and miners will, of necessity, be a very short one, for such a catastrophe would soon bring all classes to a state of starvation. The sensation of the week has been the depreciation of the franc, in terms of the one pound note. It has been evident for some time that in purchasing power the franc is not worth anything like an exchange value of 26 to the pound. And nobody can say whether the true exchange at present would be nearer 30 or 40 francs to the one-pound note. The dollar, on the other hand, is probably worth more than the official rate of exchange, and it looks as if the Washington Government had decided to allow our paper currency to find its natural value. What we want, of course, is to restore the gold standard. But if the British Government goes on spending and borrowing at the present rate, there is precious little hope of anything better than paper money for many years to come. Money became dearer in the middle of the week, and short loans have commanded 3½ per cent. The Stock Markets have been depressed, and the French Loans have begun to decline. Home rails are generally lower, and the small boom in Channel Tunnel shares has come to an end. There is some curiosity about the Budget. But the general idea is that Mr. Austen Chamberlain will leave the disagreeable business of increasing taxation to his successor next year.

#### VICKERS AND METROPOLITAN CARRIAGE.

THE proposed terms of this great industrial fusion have been given such wide publicity in the daily Press that there is no need to set them out here. It is difficult to see any reason why the shareholders in both concerns should not consider the arrangements conducive to their mutual advantage. The feature of the scheme is the alternative offer of Vickers's shares or cash for the Metropolitan securities, and at first sight it would appear likely that the majority of Metropolitan shareholders would be well advised to accept payment in shares. Payment for any part of the holdings may be taken in either form. The proposed new Vickers's issues to be made for the purpose of carrying out the scheme are of 7,000,000 £1 cumulative preference shares, and £5,100,000 ordinary shares. The whole of these huge issues has been underwritten. The two companies have, for some time past, been working in close *liaison*, but the complete fusion into one entity will doubtless assure manifold advantages and economies. Vickers's extraordinary meeting to sanction the new proposals is called for Monday next, at Sheffield. The fusion will create one of the most powerful industrial concerns in the Empire.

#### GRAND TRUNK CRISIS.

THE recent news cabled from the Dominion, that the Grand Trunk could not meet its guarantee liabilities on its Grand Trunk Pacific foster-child, and that the Minister of Railways had been appointed as receiver for the latter, has caused much perturbation on the London Stock Exchange. Why it should have done so is not very clear, for it is an event which any intelligent observer might have foreseen. It will, of course, be remembered that two years or so ago, the majority of a Royal Commission decided in favor of the nationalization of the Pacific branch, and urged also the nationalization of the whole Grand Trunk system on terms that were made the subject of much fierce controversy. At the moment of writing, one requires rather more light than has at present been vouchsafed, before delivering an opinion on the general situation. An extraordinary meeting of Grand Trunk shareholders has been called, and by the time these words are in print, the information forthcoming at that meeting may have cleared the air. At present it is only possible to say that (1) within the last few days the Grand Trunk company have announced that no dividends in respect of 1918 will be paid on the Guaranteed or Preference stocks, and (2) that since the preponderance of these securities are held in Great Britain, the question of the handling of the Grand Trunk position by the Canadian Government becomes an imperial problem of no small importance. No doubt the Dominion Government will realize that standard of just treatment which British shareholders expect. British investors, in their turn, should realise that the Dominion Government has to consider the interests and pockets of its own citizens. It is understood that nearly £50 millions of money, invested by citizens of the mother country, are involved. The slump in Stock Exchange quotations of Grand Trunk securities since the outbreak of war has averaged something in the neighbourhood of 30 per cent.

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